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ABSTRACT

This report explores the status and experiences of 388 students with disabilities who have benefited from transition improvement efforts in Minnesota over the last decade. Improvements in transition services have included establishment of a state transition interagency committee and an interagency office on transition services, development of an interagency cooperative planning agreement, receipt of federal systems change grants to fund training and model demonstration projects, and establishment of community transition interagency committees. The findings of the report are categorized into 10 areas: employment, postsecondary education and training, living arrangements, social networks, recreation and leisure, community participation, government and special services, personal satisfaction, former students who did not graduate, and high school experiences. Among findings were the following : 80 percent of the surveyed students were employed (50 percent in competitive jobs, 16 percent in sheltered employment, and 13 percent in supported employment); 28 percent had started postsecondary education; most students lived in their family homes 1 to 5 years after leaving high school; 66 percent had social networks ranging from three to eight people; few respondents made much use of state and community services; and students expressed satisfaction with their lives. Appendices include a list of six resources, survey items, and Minnesota and Federal transition legislation. (CR)

Everything you ever wanted to know...

ED 398 703

After high school -

What's happening to young adults with disabilities?

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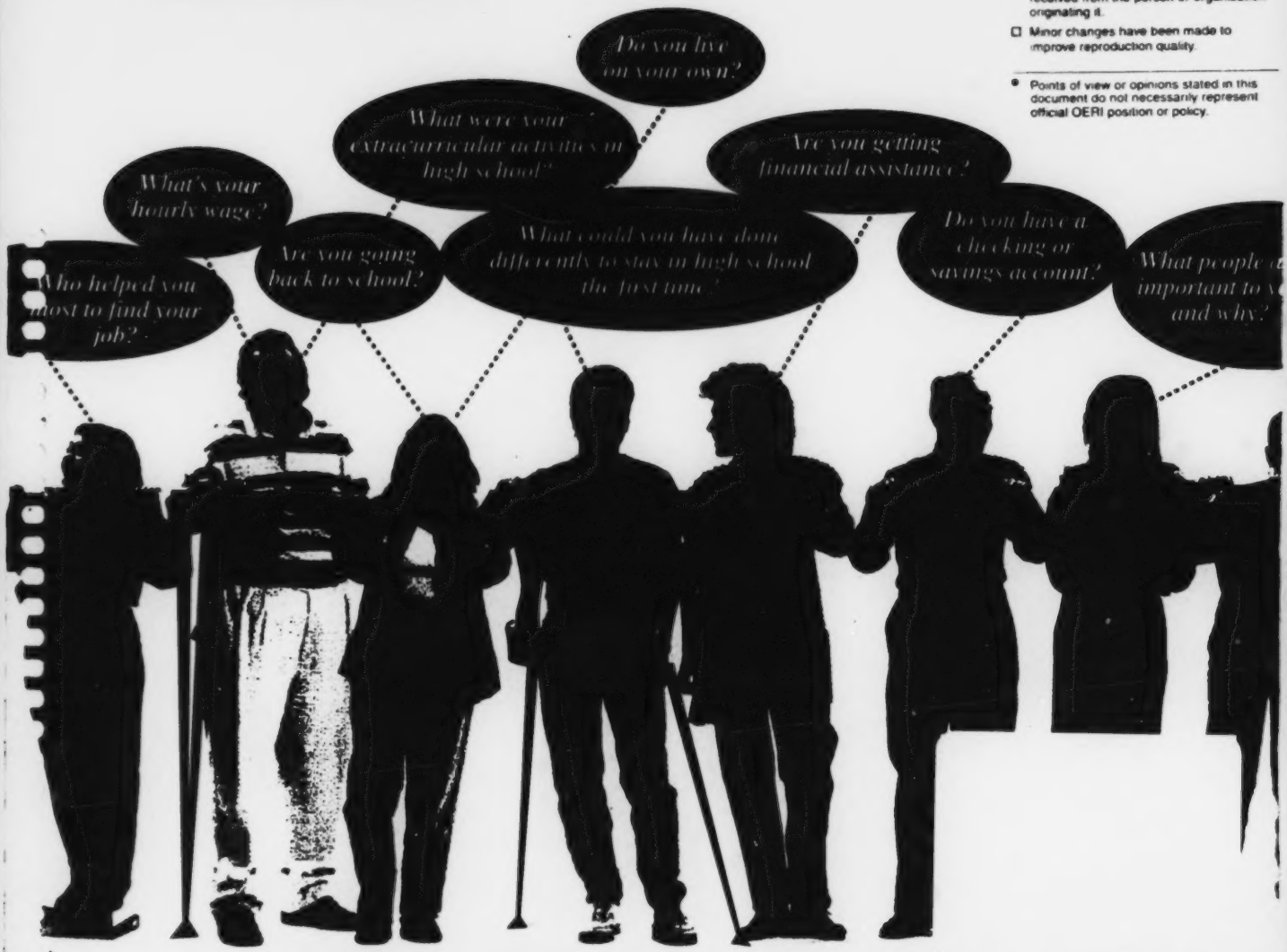
Do you live on your own?
What were your extracurricular activities in high school?
Are you getting financial assistance?
What's your hourly wage?
What could you have done differently to stay in high school the first time?
Do you have a checking or savings account?
Are you going back to school?
Who helped you most to find your job?

1994 Minnesota Post-school Follow-up Study

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Minnesota Department of Education

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Transition
From School to Adult Life

The College of Education
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Published May, 1994

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Part I: Introduction

Transition in Minnesota

The transition of youth with disabilities from school to adult life has been a major priority in Minnesota and throughout the nation for over ten years. School and postschool services have been closely examined in an effort to find ways to enhance opportunities for young adults with disabilities as they begin their adult lives. Minnesota has been at the forefront of efforts to improve transition services and has earned national recognition for developing many innovative policies and practices that have become standards for quality.

Over the past decade Minnesota has implemented numerous initiatives to improve transition services. These include, but are not limited to:

- Formation of a State Transition Interagency Committee to coordinate and guide interagency transition efforts;
- Formation of the Minnesota Interagency Office on Transition Services to provide leadership to state agencies and local communities in improving transition services;
- The development of the Minnesota Interagency Cooperative Agreement to Plan, a comprehensive plan of action to encourage collaboration among state agencies in the provision of transition services;
- The receipt of two large state systems change grants from the U.S. Department of Education Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services (OSERS) to provide funding for training and model demonstration projects in transition and supported employment; and
- The establishment of over 70 Community Transition Interagency Committees (CTICs) throughout the state to encourage collaboration among essential stakeholders at the local level.

Perhaps the most important milestone in Minnesota's efforts to improve transition services occurred in 1987 with the passage of legislation (M.S. 120.17 Subd. 3a) mandating transition planning for all Minnesota students with disabilities beginning by grade 9 or age 14. Two of the major rationales underlying this provision were: a) transition planning would encourage students, families, and professionals to focus on postschool outcomes which would result in educational experiences relevant to the long term goals of students and b) transition planning would connect high school students with professionals from state agencies and community service provider organizations to assure that appropriate services and supports were available to them as young adults.

Despite the unprecedented efforts to improve transition services in Minnesota, there is very little data to assess the impact these changes have had on the

lives of young adults with disabilities. This report provides such information concerning the status and experiences of a sample of young adults across Minnesota who have been the beneficiaries of the transition improvement efforts discussed above. While this information does not directly identify the effectiveness of specific programs, practices, or policies, it does provide an overall barometer of the efficacy of efforts that have been made to improve transition services.

The Minnesota Postschool Follow-up Study

In 1993 the Minnesota Department of Education's Interagency Office on Transition Services and Office of Special Education contracted with the Institute on Community Integration at the University of Minnesota to initiate a study of the postschool outcomes of young adults with disabilities in Minnesota who had been out of school for one to five years. Former students had attended school after the passage of the 1987 state transition legislation, which mandated transition planning.

This project had two main objectives: a.) to obtain a broad measure of how former students who received special education services while in high school were faring as young adults and b.) to provide technical assistance to a select number of Community Transition Interagency Committees (CTICs) that were involved in collection of postschool follow-up information. In total, eleven Minnesota communities participated.

Uses of This Information

This information will serve as an important bench mark for Community Transition Interagency Committees (CTICs) as they collect postschool follow-up information on local samples and develop annual goals. High school educators will find this information helpful when evaluating their school's secondary curriculum and transition practices. These findings can also provide the State Transition Interagency Committee with an indication of the extent to which their agencies' services are meeting the needs of young adults with disabilities. Additionally, youth with disabilities who are currently in high school along with family members can use these data to obtain a sense of the future issues they may encounter upon school departure. A review of the findings may help stimulate the thinking of interagency teams who are involved in developing transition plans with individuals. Finally, this information can provide policymakers with comprehensive data on the status and experiences of young adults with disabilities and should be especially useful in tracking the progress of transition services over time.

Introduction to Sections II, III, IV

Section II provides detailed information regarding sample selection, survey instrument development, and data collection procedures. Additionally, this section describes the characteristics of the sample in terms of disability, gender, age, time of high school departure, region, and graduation status. This section concludes with a discussion of the limitations of this study.

Section III reports the results of this investigation across the following eight categories of postschool adjustment: employment, postsecondary education and training, living arrangements, social network, recreation and leisure, community participation and citizenship, service use and service interest, and personal satisfaction. Section III also includes findings concerning the high school experiences of the sample and the experiences of young adults who did not graduate from high school.

Section IV summarizes the major findings from this study and compares these findings to four other postschool follow-up studies of young adults with disabilities that were previously completed in Minnesota as well as to the National Longitudinal Transition Study (NLTS).

Part II: Sample Characteristics and Methodology

The sample for the Minnesota Postschool Follow-up Study is comprised of 388 young adults with disabilities from eleven Minnesota communities. Table 1 identifies the number of former students from each community that were selected for participation in the study and the number on whom interviews were successfully completed.

Sample Selection

Sample selection occurred in two phases. The first phase began in the fall of 1989 as part of a federally funded transition project. One hundred seventy-six (176) youth from Minneapolis and seventeen (17) youth from St. Cloud were selected for postschool follow-up interviews while they were enrolled in high school. From June 1991 through July 1993, one hundred twelve (112) of these individuals were interviewed one to two years after they last attended school.

Phase two of the sample selection process used a quasi-random sampling procedure. The Interagency Office on Transition Services identified eleven communities (Table 1), including Minneapolis and St. Cloud, with Community Transition Interagency Committees (CTICs) that had established an annual goal of collecting follow-up information on a local sample of former students. Additionally, communities were selected to obtain a relatively equal representation of former students from metropolitan (Twin City area), mid-sized city (cites over 50,000) and rural (towns less than 20,000) areas. The Interagency Office on Transition Services provided the Institute on Community Integration (ICI) with names of representatives from the eleven CTICs. ICI contacted these individuals and requested their participation in the Minnesota Postschool Follow-up Study.

Site coordinators, recruited from each community, worked with the local school district(s) to generate lists of former students for follow-up interviews. Young adults meeting the following criteria were included on the list: a) the school needed to have adequate information to contact former students (e.g. address, phone number, etc.); b) former students needed to have left school before August of 1992 and after September of 1987; and c) former students needed to have been diagnosed with a primary disability of learning disability (LD), emotional/behavioral disorder (EBD), mild mental impairment (MMI), or moderate/severe (Mod/Sev) disability while in high school. Individuals in the

Table 1: Sample Composition and Contact Rates

Region/ Community	Total I (number interviewed)	Total A (number attempted)	Learning Disability				Emotional/ Behavioral Disorder				Mild Mental Impairment				Moderate/Severe Disability			
			Male		Female		Male		Female		Male		Female		Male		Female	
			I	A	I	A	I	A	I	A	I	A	I	A	I	A	I	A
Metropolitan																		
Minneapolis	98	176	37	68	18	31	6	13	2	4	10	21	5	10	17	21	3	8
Hopkins	22	50	4	11	6	9	5	10	3	8	2	5	1	5	1	2	0	0
Mid-Sized City																		
St. Cloud	57	63	11	12	10	10	1	2	0	0	8	8	9	13	12	12	6	6
Duluth	40	116	4	24	5	26	3	6	4	8	6	15	5	12	8	12	5	13
Rochester	45	66	7	9	7	10	5	9	3	5	9	10	5	9	6	9	3	5
Rural																		
New Prague	19	38	4	8	2	2	0	4	2	6	4	5	3	8	3	4	1	1
Willmar	25	49	4	10	4	4	1	12	1	6	5	6	4	5	3	3	3	3
Windom	16	21	4	5	0	0	0	2	0	0	2	3	1	2	3	3	6	6
Thief River Falls	18	63	1	8	4	10	3	13	1	7	1	6	2	6	4	9	2	4
Brainerd	27	35	4	4	4	9	4	6	3	4	4	4	4	4	1	1	3	3
Albert Lea	21	28	4	4	4	4	5	5	3	4	1	4	4	4	0	1	0	2
TOTALS	388	705	84	163	64	115	33	82	22	52	52	87	43	78	58	77	32	51
Total Interviewed/Attempted by Disability			148/278				55/134				95/165				90/128			
Response Rate		55%	54%				41%				57%				70%			

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"moderate/severe disability" group included former students with primary disability diagnoses of moderate, severe, and profound mental retardation as well as persons with primary disability labels of "autistic" and "multiple disability" when there was evidence of moderate to profound intellectual disability.

Former students in the four disability groups that comprise the sample constitute approximately 95% of youth who receive special education services in Minnesota. It was felt that efforts to obtain follow-up information on young adults with other types of disabilities would have resulted in total numbers too small to draw meaningful conclusions.

Each site coordinator chose how many years of school leavers (i.e. high school classes) they wanted to include in their local sample. While some decided to include former students who had been out of school one to five years, others elected to only include those who had been out for one to three years. Potential participants within each disability group were further divided by gender. A maximum number of youth from each disability/gender group was identified from each community for selection in the sample.

Site coordinators used the table of random numbers to select former students for postschool interviews. A total of 512 young adults were selected for follow-up interviews in this phase of the sample selection process. Two hundred seventy-six (276) former students were contacted and interviewed during the months of June, July, August, and September of 1993.

Contact Rates

Table 1 reveals that 55% of those selected for the study were interviewed. This contact rate is sufficient for drawing valid conclusions from postschool follow-up data (Bruininks, Wolman, & Thurlow, 1990). The contact rates for men (56%) and women (54%) were essentially the same. Table 2 shows that the contact rates were also similar across the different population regions. The Metro, Mid-sized City, and Rural regions had contact rates of 53%, 54%, and 58% respectively.

In contrast to the consistency of the contact rates for region and gender, the rates varied considerably for young adults in the four disability groups. While interviewers successfully contacted 70% of the individuals in the moderate/severe disability group, only 41% of the young adults in the emotional/behavioral disorder group were interviewed. The learning disability and mild mental impairment categories had contact rates of 54% and 57% respectively. While the contact rate for emotional/behavioral disorder group is disappointing, it is not particularly surprising. Previous follow-up studies of young adults with this disability have consistently reported contact rates below 50%.

Survey Instrument Development and Data

Interviewers used a scripted interview survey to collect information for this

Table 2: Regional Contact Rates

	Metro		Mid-sized City		Rural	
Disability	I	A	I	A	I	A
LD	65	119	44	91	39	68
EBD	16	35	16	30	23	69
MMI	18	41	42	67	35	57
Mod/Sev	21	31	40	57	29	40
TOTAL	**120**	**226**	**142**	**245**	**126**	**234**

I –Number Interviewed
A–Number Attempted

project. The survey was the fourth revision of an instrument developed at the Institute on Community Integration at the University of Minnesota. The original survey was based on input from: (a) a survey of practitioners nationwide about follow-up information considered important for programs to have to plan for the needs of students receiving special education, (b) a review of instruments used by other postschool follow-up projects in the United States, and (c) a task force of school district officials. Questions from the original survey were used in the Minnesota Postschool Follow-up System (Johnson & Sinclair, 1990). The survey used in this study is an expanded version of the Minnesota Postschool Follow-up System. Survey questions appear in Section III and Appendix B.

Project staff met with each site coordinator and carefully reviewed the data collection procedures for the study. In most cases the interviewers also attended this meeting. Site coordinators received packets of training materials to provide to local interviewers that included explicit instructions for initiating and conducting follow-up interviews. Most interviews took between fifteen and thirty minutes to complete. Ninety-five percent (95%) of the interviews were completed over the telephone, with the remaining interviews completed "in person" (i.e., face to face).

Sample Characteristics

Demographic data collected on each former student included disability classification while in high school, age, gender, month and year of high school departure, community of residence, and graduation status. Prior research studies have shown that these variables are associated with postschool outcomes to varying degrees.

Figure 1 shows the percentage of former students in the sample from each disability group. Past research has clearly established that young adults with learning disabilities tend to experience considerably more positive postschool

outcomes than young adults from the other disability groups included in this project. Whenever the results from the total sample are discussed in this report, it is important to note the disproportional influence that the larger number of young adults from the learning disability group will have on the findings.

Figure 2 reveals that the sample in this study is primarily comprised of former students from the classes of 1990, 1991, and 1992. Only 18% of the sample left school before the start of the 1989-1990 school year.

Former students in the mild mentally impaired and the moderate/severe

Figure 1: Representation of Four Disability Groups

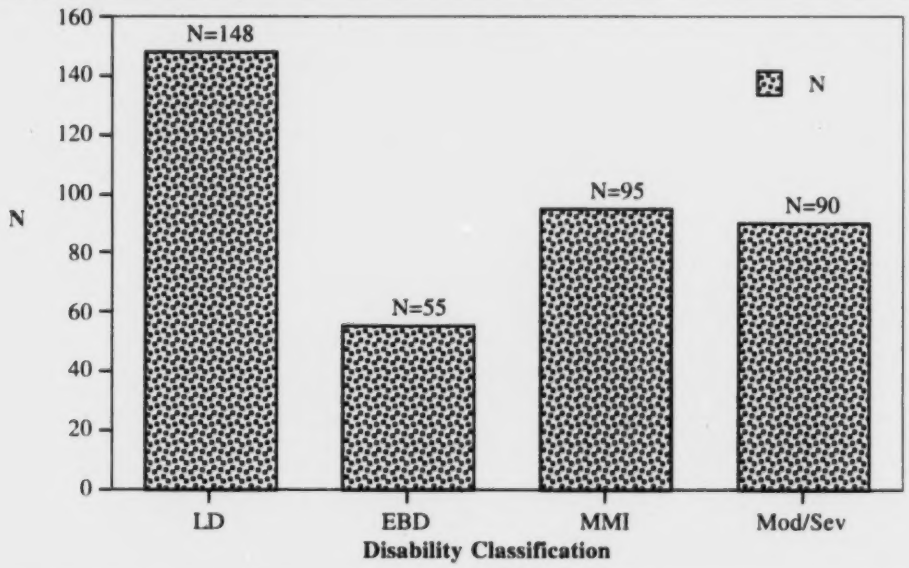


Figure 2: Year of High School Departure

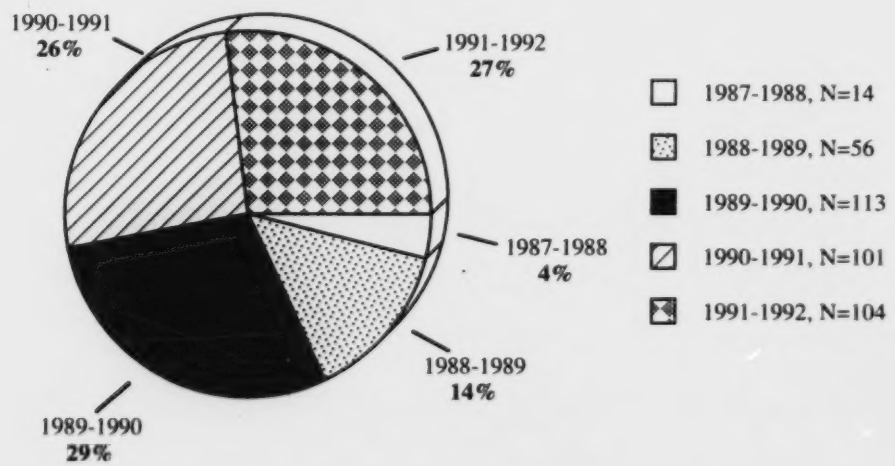
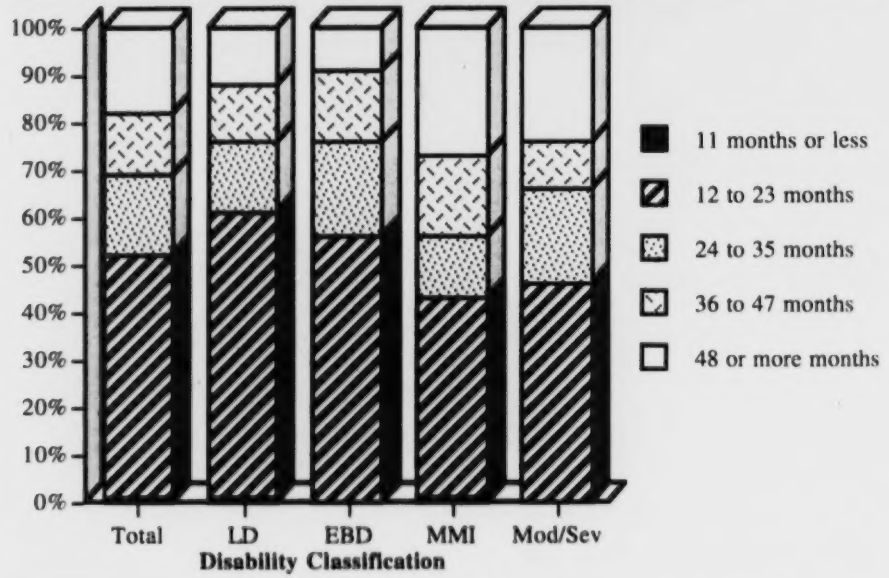


Figure 3: Length of Time Since Last Attending High School



disability groups were older and had been out of school longer than former students in the other two groups (Figures 3 and 4). This may inflate the outcomes of youth in the mild mentally impaired and moderate/severe disability groups relative to the other former students. Findings from past research reveal that young adults generally experience more desirable outcomes as they grow older and are out of school longer. At the time of the interviews, the average (mean) time out of school for the entire sample was two years, two months and the average (mean) age was 21 years, seven months.

Of the young adults interviewed, men outnumbered women 227 (59%) to 161 (41%). Gender composition was relatively consistent across the four disability groups. While findings from some prior studies have indicated that males experience better young adult outcomes (e.g. more independence) than females, other studies have found no differences. The disproportionate percentage of males in the sample may make these findings more optimistic than if the sample were divided equally by gender.

The sample is clearly nonrepresentative in terms of the graduation status of the young adults. According to the Fourteenth Annual Report to Congress on the Implementation of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (1992), only 62% of youth with disabilities in Minnesota who left school during the 1989-89 school year graduated. As can be seen in Figure 5, 92% of the individuals in this study were high school graduates. Previous follow-up studies have consistently found that young adults who graduate from high school experience considerably more positive postschool outcomes than non-graduates.

Figure 4: Age of Former Students

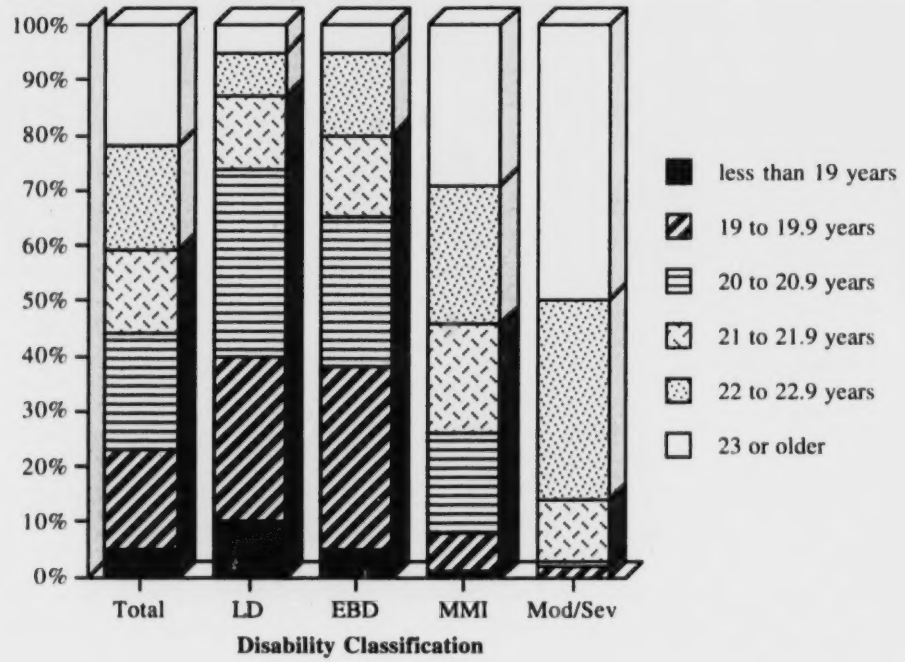
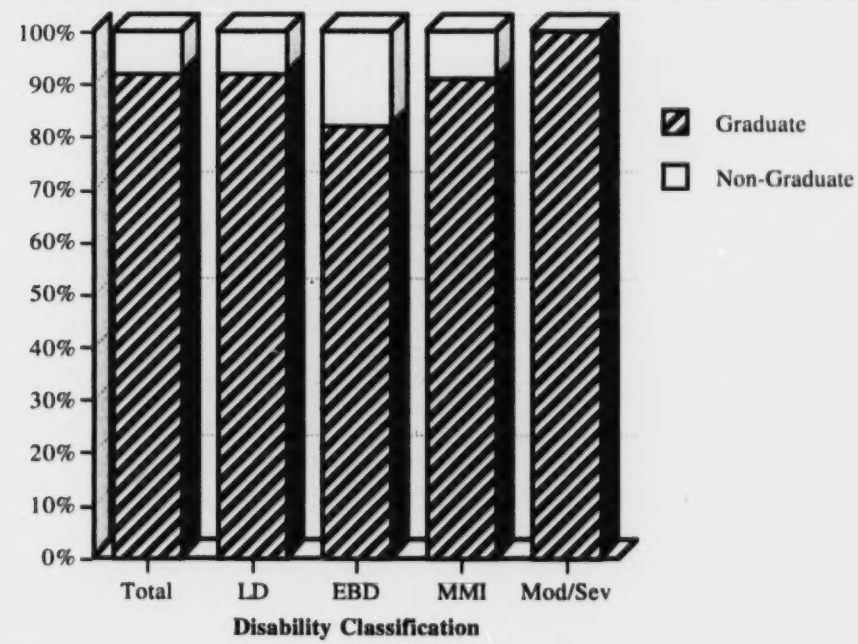


Figure 5: Graduation Status



Respondents

Figures 6 and 7 show who responded to interviewer's questions in this study. Young adults themselves provided information in 82%, 69%, and 71% of the interviews conducted concerning youth with learning disabilities, emotional/ behavioral disorders, and mild mental impairments respectively. Parents (56%) were the most likely respondents for interviews concerning young adults in the moderate/severe group. Another informed adult was the respondent in 13% of the interviews, most of which concerned young adults in the moderate/severe

Figure 6: Interview Respondent

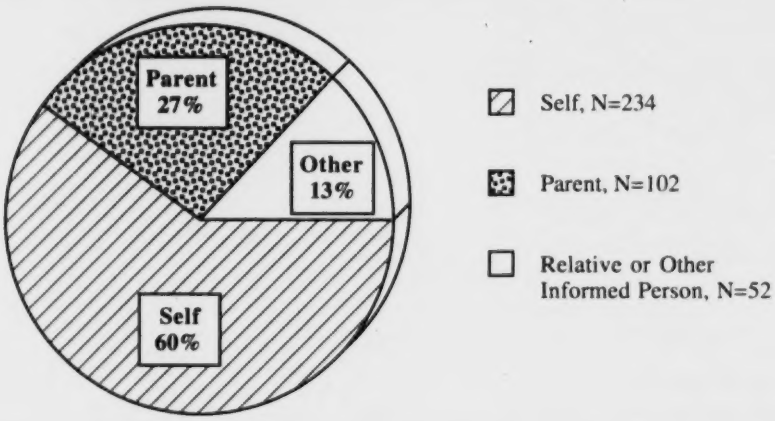
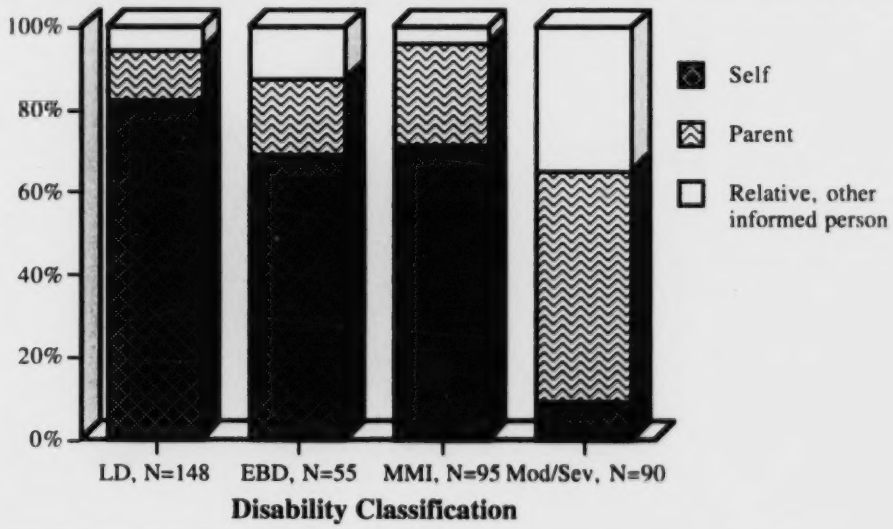


Figure 7: Interview Respondent by Disability Group



disability group. "Other informed adult" included siblings, extended family members, and professional staff in vocational and residential programs.

Limitations

The findings in this study must be interpreted with a degree of caution due to limitations associated with the methodology. These limitations are not unique to this study and are discussed to encourage readers to maintain a proper perspective when reviewing the findings.

Readers should note the extent of the missing data on specific survey items. Although missing data was the result of many causes, it most often occurred during situations where the respondent was unsure of or did not know the answer to a particular question. Respondents also had the option of choosing not to answer a survey question if they felt the information was too personal.

Readers should also understand that while all of the interviewers attempted to get accurate information, there were no attempts to assess the veracity of the information. To do so would have required interviewing third parties such as employers, postsecondary educators, etc. These findings are based solely on the information that the respondent provided to the interviewers and it is assumed that all of the information is accurate.

Finally, recent research indicates that mixing respondents in the same study (e.g. self, parents, others) introduces a degree of bias into the findings because different informants often do not provide the same information. The validity of information provided by a respondent other than the young adult in regard to questions that require a subjective answer (e.g. reports of personal satisfaction or expressions of opinions regarding past and current services) are especially difficult to interpret.

These limitations do not necessarily make any of the findings less valid, but rather simply require the reader to interpret the results with a degree of caution. Despite these limitations, this study provides a broad picture of the lives of nearly four hundred young adults with disabilities who were the recipients of considerable efforts to improve transition policy and services. While future follow-up studies will be needed to bring this picture into sharper focus, these findings can provide a starting point to those who believe that progress in improving the quality of transition services must ultimately be reflected in the lives of the individuals who have received the services.

Part III: Findings from the Minnesota Postschool Follow-up Study

Employment

Survey Questions

Survey questions focused on the extent to which young adults were stable in their employment and the extent to which employment provided the resources and other benefits needed to participate economically in community life. The daily activities of unemployed former students were investigated as well. Interviewers asked these questions:

- Are you working for pay or in the military?
- Do you have more than one paying job?
- Is your employment best described as competitive, sheltered, or supported?
- How long have you worked at your current job(s)?
- On the average, how many hours do you work per week?
- What is your average hourly wage?
- Who most helped you find your current job?
- What job promotions or benefits have you received since starting your main job?
- If you are not currently working please describe your daily activity.
- How many jobs have you had since leaving high school? Please describe what you did for each of your previous jobs and indicate how long you were employed at them.
- Was there ever a period of time, since leaving high school, that you did not have a job? If so, when and for how long were you without a job?

Findings

Figure 8 shows that 80% of the former students were employed at the time of the interview. Of the four disability groups, the unemployment rate was highest among former students in the emotional/behavioral disorder group (25%) and lowest among young adults with moderate/severe disabilities (18%). Interestingly, all of the unemployed young adults in the moderate/severe disability group had been without a paying job for the entire time they had been out of high

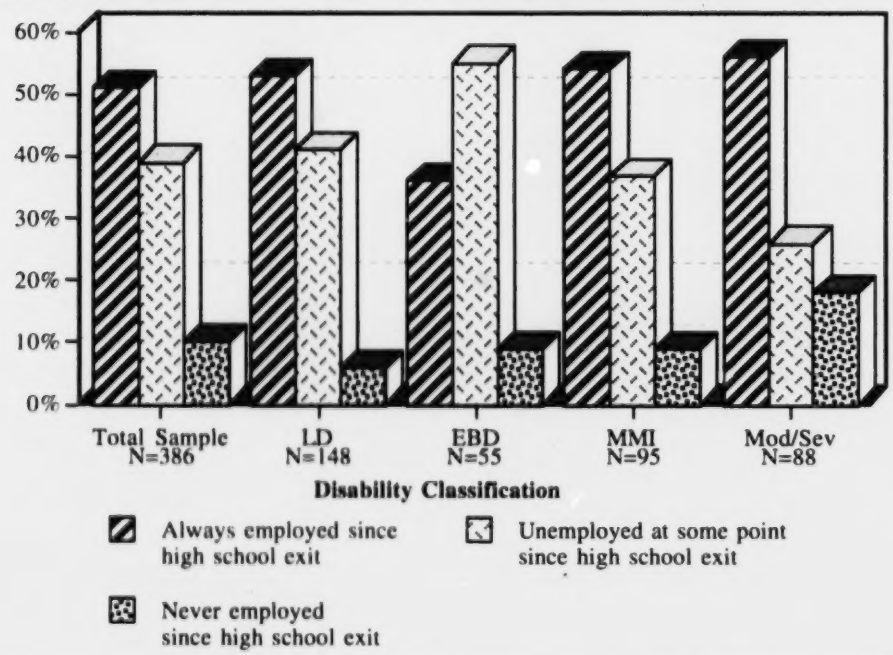
school. There were only small differences in the unemployment rates of youth from the three different population regions (rural, mid-sized city, or metro).

Figure 8: Employment Rate

Figure 9 illustrates the employment history of the sample since their high school departure. Although 20% of the sample were unemployed at the time of the interview, 39% reported that they had experienced a period of unemployment since leaving high school. Only 9% had been unemployed the entire time. Young adults in the emotional/ behavioral disorder group were most likely to have experienced a period of unemployment - only 36% of these young adults had been continuously employed since leaving high school.

The daytime activities of unemployed young adults are shown in Figures 10

Figure 9: Employment History Since Leaving High School



and 11. These activities varied considerably by disability group. The majority (56%) of individuals in the moderate/severe group attended a day program where they did not receive any pay. The majority of former students in the other three groups were "unengaged". That is, they were not employed nor involved in any type of schooling or training activity.

Employed young adults were classified into four groups based upon the nature of their employment. "Military" refers to employment in any branch of the nation's armed services. "Competitive" refers to situations where individuals

Figure 10: Daytime Activities of Unemployed Young Adults

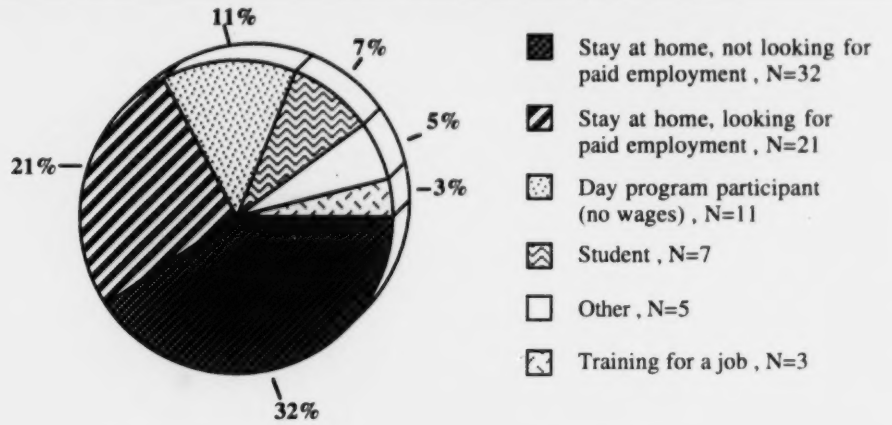
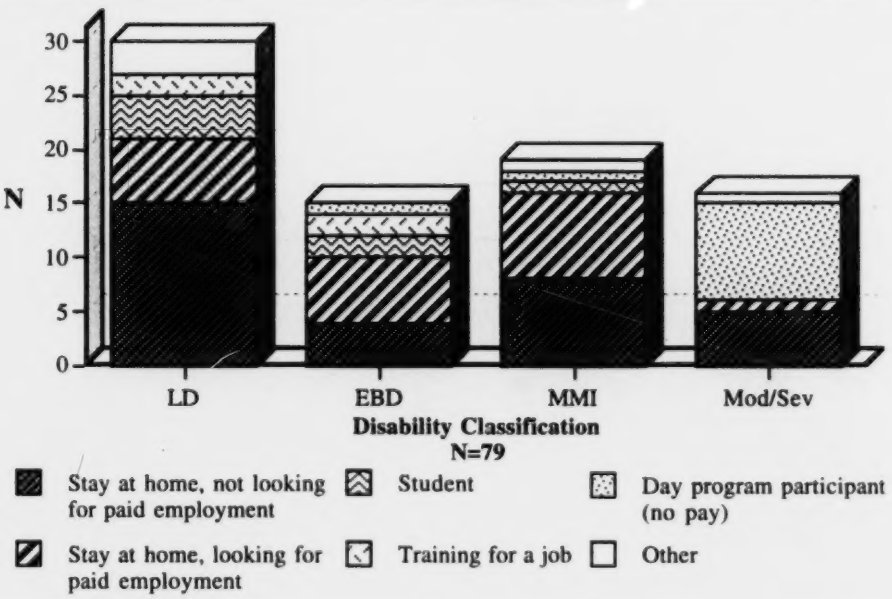


Figure 11: Daytime Activities of Unemployed Young Adults by Disability Classification



work for a community employer receiving the same wages and benefits as others in the work place and where there is no formal plan to provide ongoing services to maintain employment. "Supported" includes work situations where individuals work at jobs in the community with ongoing support either individually or as part of a work group (i.e. enclave) of persons with disabilities. "Sheltered" employment includes situations where individuals work for pay in a setting that is primarily comprised of workers with disabilities.

Figures 12 and 13 show the status of young adults across the four different types of employment. It is interesting to note that half (50%) of the sample

Figure 12: Employment Status

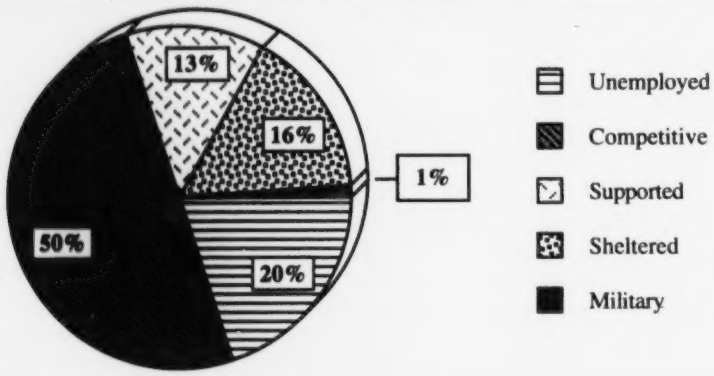
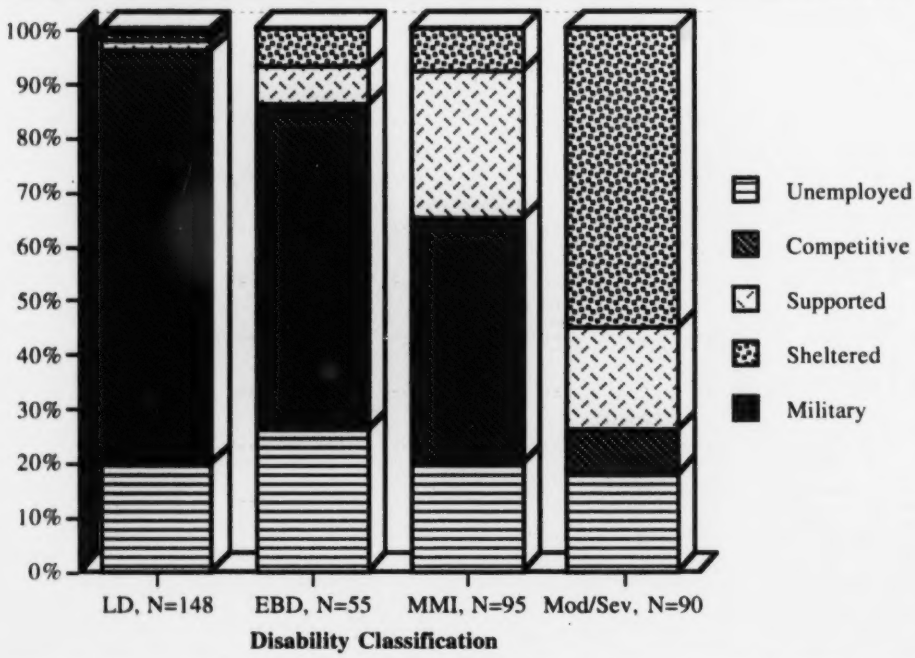


Figure 13: Employment Status by Disability Group



worked at competitive jobs. Supported employment services were used primarily by youth in the mild mentally impaired and moderate/severe disability groups. A much larger percentage of young adults in the moderate/severe disability group (56%) worked in sheltered employment settings in comparison to the other groups.

The weekly earnings information in Figures 14 and 15 was generated by multiplying average hourly wages by hours worked per week. These figures include income that former students earned on their second jobs. Figure 14

Figure 14: Weekly Earnings of Former Students in Three Types of Employment Situations

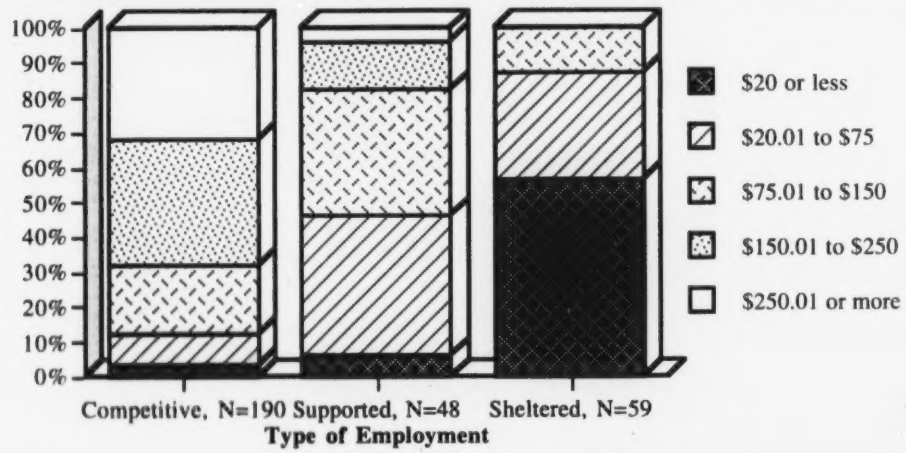
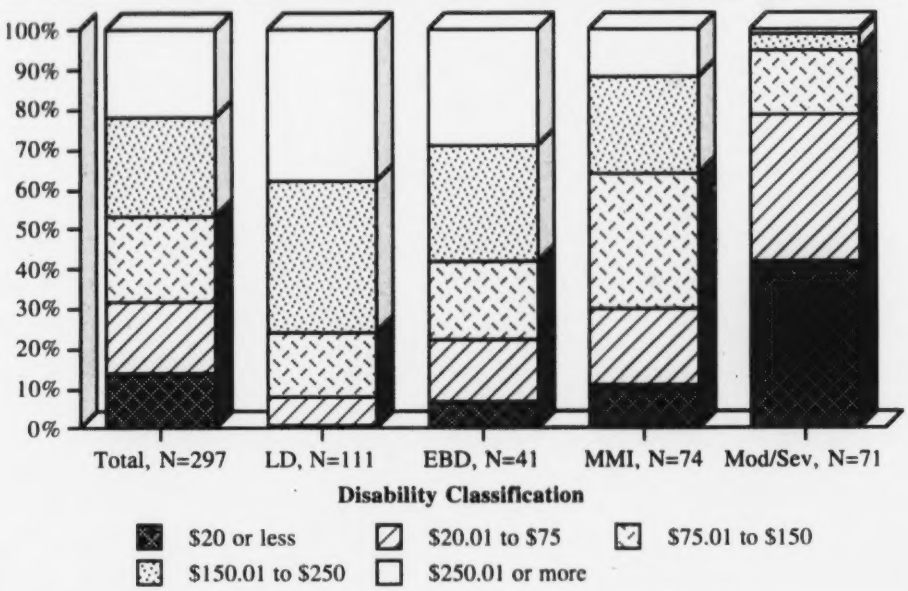


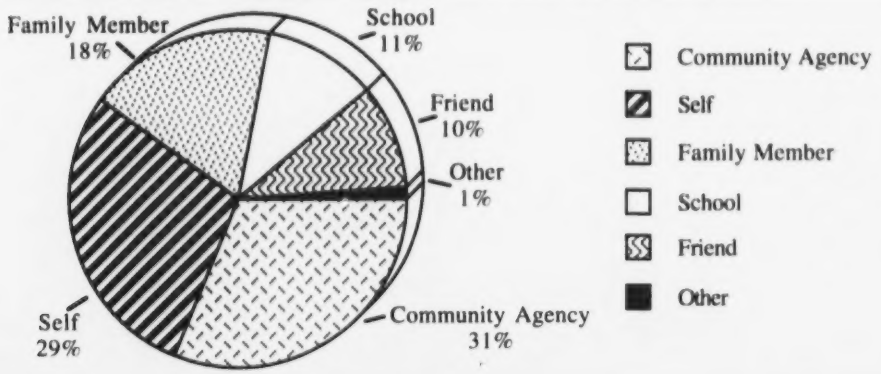
Figure 15: Weekly Earnings of Employed Former Students



clearly shows that young adults whose main jobs were in competitive employment earned the most money. There was also a clear difference in weekly earnings between the supported and sheltered employment groups. The average (mean) weekly wages for supported employees ($96.76) was over three times that for sheltered workers ($30.45). Distinct differences in the weekly earnings of employed young adults from the four disability groups are obviously related to the proportion within each group that are working competitively.

Figures 16 through 19 indicate who was most responsible for helping young adults find their current jobs. In 56% of the main jobs and 67% of second jobs

Figure 16: Who Most Helped Young Adults Find Their Main Job



the "self, family, friend" network was credited with securing employment for the young adults. Individuals in the mildly mentally impaired and moderate/severe disability groups were much more likely to have obtained employment with the help of staff from either community agencies (including state agencies) or schools.

Because funding for supported and sheltered employment requires the

Figure 17: Who Most Helped Young Adults Find Their Second Job

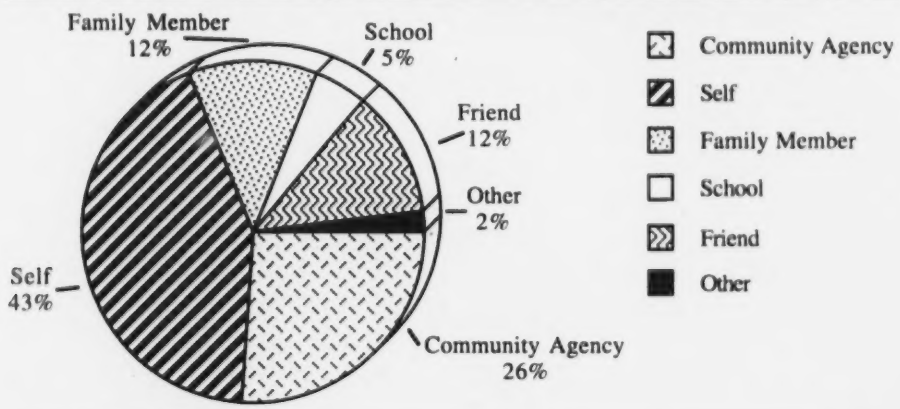
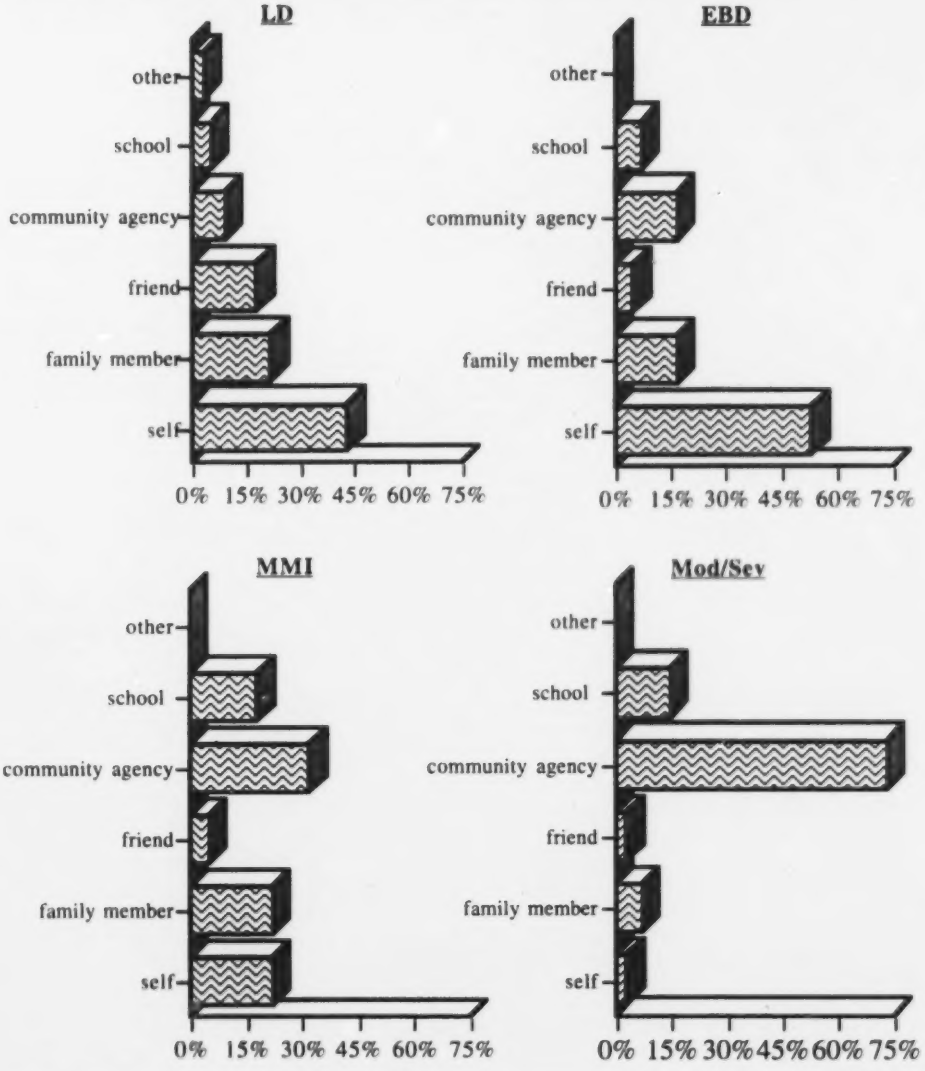


Figure 18: Who Most Helped Young Adults in Four Disability Groups Find Their Main Job



involvement of community and state agencies, it is not surprising that "community agencies" were identified as being most responsible for helping a large proportion of the individuals working in these situations find their jobs. Although nearly 80% of the young adults working in competitive employment obtained their jobs through the "self, family, friend" network, it is important to note that 20% credited community agencies and schools as being most responsible.

Length of employment is always a difficult finding to interpret. In one sense, remaining at a job for an extended period of time is an indicator of job stability.

Figure 19: Who Most Helped Young Adults Working in Different Employment Situations Find Their Main Job

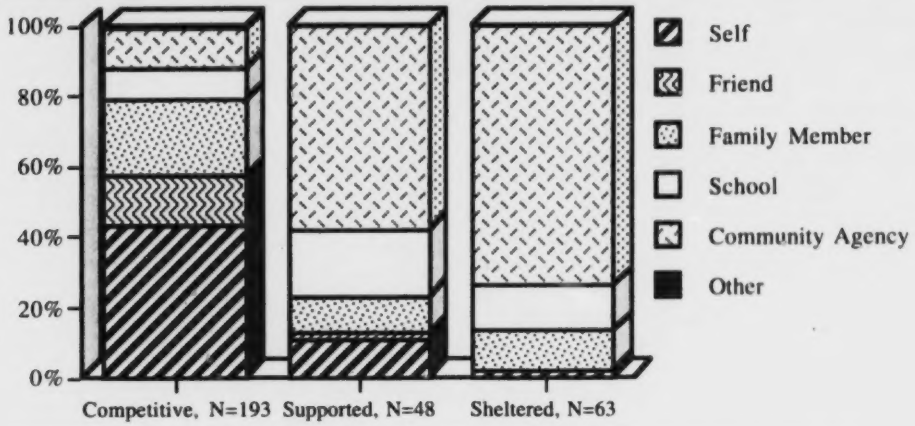
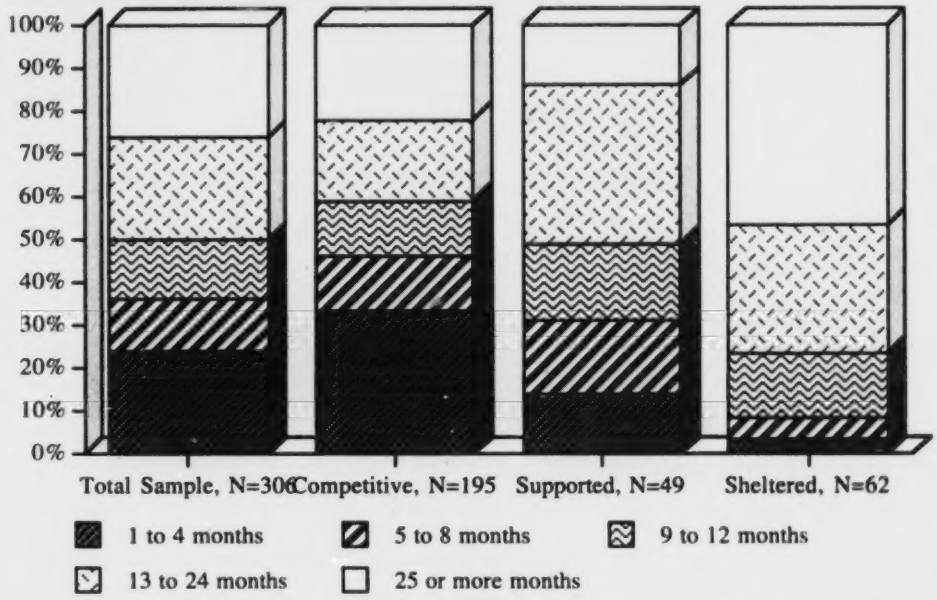


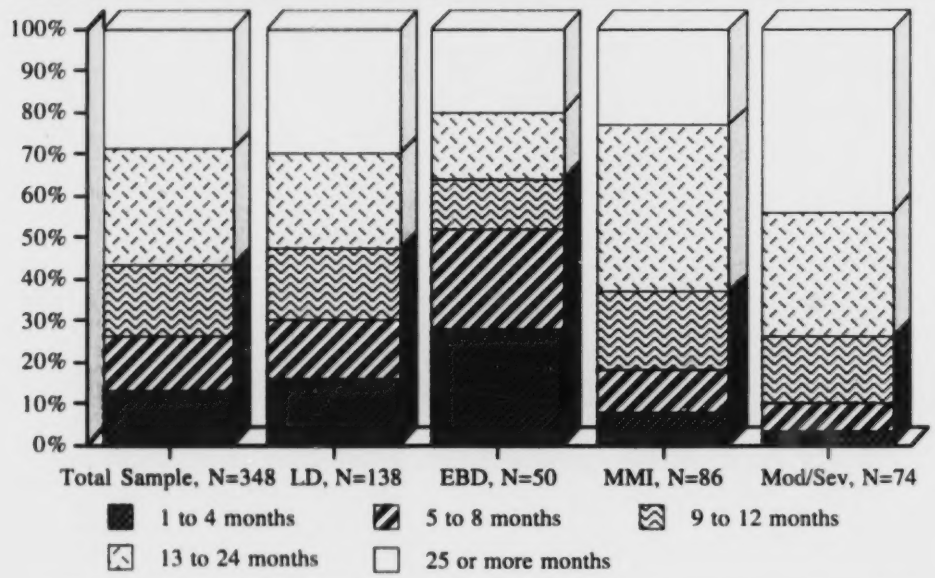
Figure 20: Length of Time on Main Job by Employment Type



However, for some young adults remaining at the same job for an extended period of time may be the result of having few opportunities for career advancement (e.g. limited chances to move onto more challenging or better paying positions). Figure 20 shows the length of time that former students have been working on their primary job by their type of employment situation. It is apparent that many former students who enter sheltered employment remain working in sheltered employment for an extended period of time. The results also indicate that supported employment jobs are as stable as jobs in competitive employment.

Figure 21 shows the maximum length of time that former students were employed on the same job since leaving high school. It is not surprising that over three quarters of the young adults in the moderate/severe disability group had work histories that included continuous employment on a job for over thirteen months. These youth had been out of school longer than youth in the other groups and a large proportion were employed in sheltered workshops. It appears that more young adults with learning disabilities and mild mental impairments have work histories that include spending longer periods of time on the same job in comparison to individuals in the emotional/behavioral disorder group.

Figure 21: Maximum Length of Time that Former Students Remained Employed on the Same Job (Last Three Jobs)



Interviewers asked employed young adults whether or not they had received six types of job benefits and promotions since beginning their primary job. Figure 22 shows a strong relationship between receiving different kinds of benefits and promotions and the young adults' work situations. Former students working at competitive jobs were far more likely to have received benefits and promotions than individuals in sheltered and supported employment.

The fact that former students in competitive jobs worked more hours per week (mean = 32.3) on their jobs than young adults in supported (mean = 25.7) and sheltered (mean = 23.7) employment undoubtedly contributed to the discrepancy in benefits and promotions. The extent of the relationship between hours worked and number of promotions and benefits received is clear in Table 3. Within each job type (competitive, supported, sheltered), individuals who worked more hours were more likely to have received a greater number of benefits and promotions than those who worked fewer hours.

Figure 22: Benefits and Promotions Received Since Starting Work in Three Types of Employment Situations

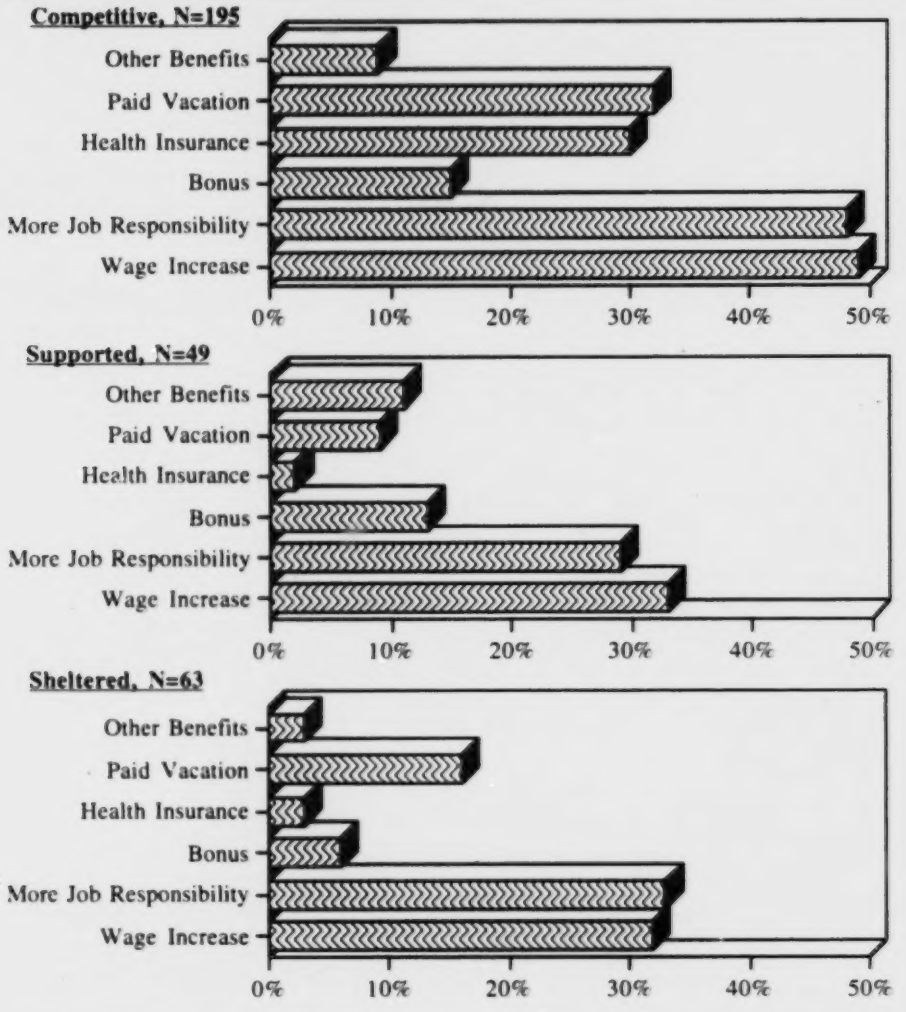


Table 3: Hours Worked Per Week and Number of Benefits/Promotions Received on Main Job

Hours Worked/Job Type (N)	Number of Hours Worked Per Week and Number of Benefits/Promotions Received on Main Job						
	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
Less than 10 hours							
Competitive (11)	8	2	1	0	0	0	0
Supported (1)	1	0	0	0	0	0	0
Sheltered (6)	2	2	2	0	0	0	0
10 - 19 hours							
Competitive (17)	9	3	2	1	1	1	0
Supported (8)	5	2	1	0	0	0	0
Sheltered (11)	7	3	1	0	0	0	0
20 - 29 hours							
Competitive (38)	14	7	11	1	3	1	1
Supported (19)	9	6	3	0	1	0	0
Sheltered (16)	7	4	3	2	0	0	0
30 - 34 hours							
Competitive (22)	8	4	4	3	1	2	0
Supported (11)	4	4	1	2	0	0	0
Sheltered (23)	11	7	3	1	1	0	0
35 or more hours							
Competitive (107)	24	14	20	17	24	6	2
Supported (10)	5	1	0	3	1	0	0
Sheltered (7)	1	3	1	1	1	0	0

Postsecondary Education and Training

Survey Questions

Postsecondary education and training survey items elicited information about the student status of young adults and the extent of their participation in four types of postsecondary programs. Interviewers asked the following questions about former students:

- Are you currently a full or part time student?
- Have you considered enrollment, applied to, started, or completed an apprenticeship, technical college, community college, or university/four year college program?

Findings

Figure 23 shows that 19% of the young adults were currently full or part

Figure 23: Postsecondary Status

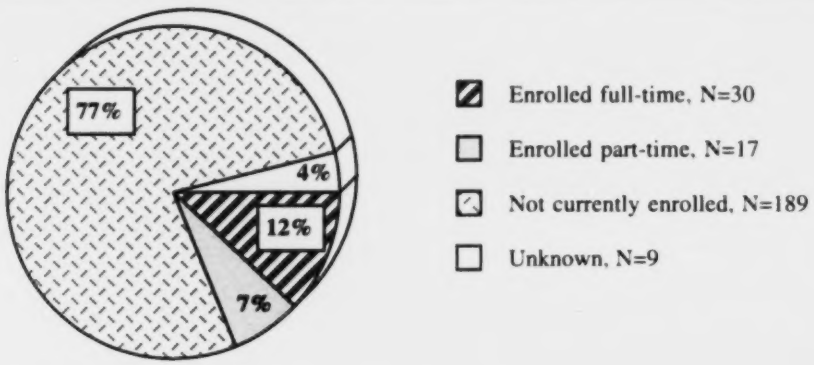
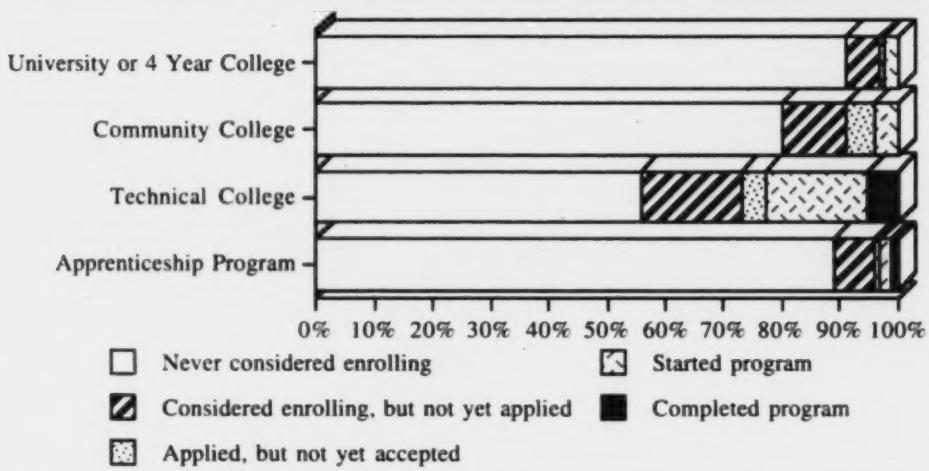


Figure 24: Postsecondary Status for Four Types of Educational Programs


University or 4 Year College
Community College
Technical College
Apprenticeship Program
0% 10% 20% 30% 40% 50% 60% 70% 80% 90% 100%
Never considered enrolling
Considered enrolling, but not yet applied
Applied, but not yet accepted
Started program
Completed program

time students. It is important to note that the majority of the interviews occurred during the summer months and this question may have been misinterpreted by some respondents. While the intent of the question was to determine how many young adults attended postsecondary programs during the most recent school year, some respondents may have responded "no" because they were on summer vacation.

Figure 24 reveals the extent of young adults' participation in four types of postsecondary programs. The young adults in this sample attended technical colleges more often than other postsecondary programs. Almost one fourth of the sample had either started or completed programs at a technical college.

Tables 4 through 7 show participation in the four postsecondary programs by disability grouping. Nearly all of the students who started or completed postsecondary programs are young adults with learning disabilities, emotional/behavioral disorders, or mild mental impairments. Forty-four (44%) percent of the learning disability group, 34% of the mild mentally impaired group, and

Table 4: Status of Young Adults with Learning Disabilities in Four Types of Programs

	Apprenticeship Program	Technical College	Community College	University or 4 Year College
Never considered enrolling	84 (90%)	48 (48%)	70 (69%)	87 (87%)
Considered enrolling, but not yet applied	2 (2%)	24 (24%)	15 (15%)	7 (7%)
Applied, but not yet accepted	1 (1%)	5 (5%)	10 (10%)	1 (1%)
Started program	4 (5%)	18 (18%)	7 (6%)	5 (5%)
Completed program	2 (2%)	5 (5%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)

Table 5: Status of Young Adults with Emotional/Behavioral Disorders in Four Types of Programs

	Apprenticeship Program	Technical College	Community College	University or 4 Year College
Never considered enrolling	23 (85%)	14 (51%)	18 (67%)	24 (89%)
Considered enrolling, but not yet applied	3 (11%)	5 (19%)	6 (22%)	3 (11%)
Applied, but not yet accepted	1 (4%)	2 (7%)	1 (4%)	0 (0%)
Started program	0 (0%)	5 (19%)	2 (7%)	0 (0%)
Completed program	0 (0%)	1 (4%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)

29% of the emotional/behavioral disordered group had either started or completed a postsecondary program since leaving high school. These percentages are in sharp contrast to the moderate/severe disability group where only 4% had started and none had completed a postsecondary program.

Table 6: Status of Young Adults with Mild Mental Impairments in Four Types of Programs

	Apprenticeship Program	Technical College	Community College	University or 4 Year College
Never considered enrolling	57 (99%)	27 (47%)	53 (91%)	54 (93%)
Considered enrolling, but not yet applied	1 (1%)	7 (12%)	5 (9%)	4 (7%)
Applied, but not yet accepted	0 (0%)	3 (5%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)
Started program	0 (0%)	15 (26%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)
Completed program	0 (0%)	5 (10%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)

Table 7: Status of Young Adults with Moderate/Severe Disabilities in Four Types of Programs

	Apprenticeship Program	Technical College	Community College	University or 4 Year College
Never considered enrolling	39 (93%)	37 (88%)	42 (100%)	42 (100%)
Considered enrolling, but not yet applied	3 (7%)	3 (7%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)
Applied, but not yet accepted	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)
Started program	0 (0%)	2 (5%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)
Completed program	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)

Living Arrangements

Survey Questions

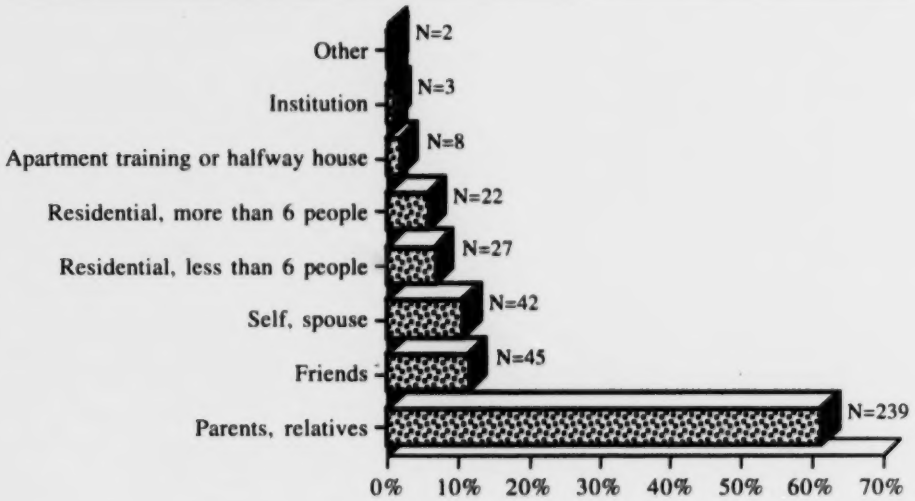
Survey questions associated with living arrangements assessed the extent to which former students lived independently as well as their status on waiting lists for residential services. Interviewers asked:

- Where do you currently live?
- Are you on a waiting list for another place to live? If so, how long have you been on the waiting list?

Findings

Figure 25 shows that the majority (62%) of former students continued to live with parents and relatives following their high school departure. Figure 26

Figure 25: Living Arrangements

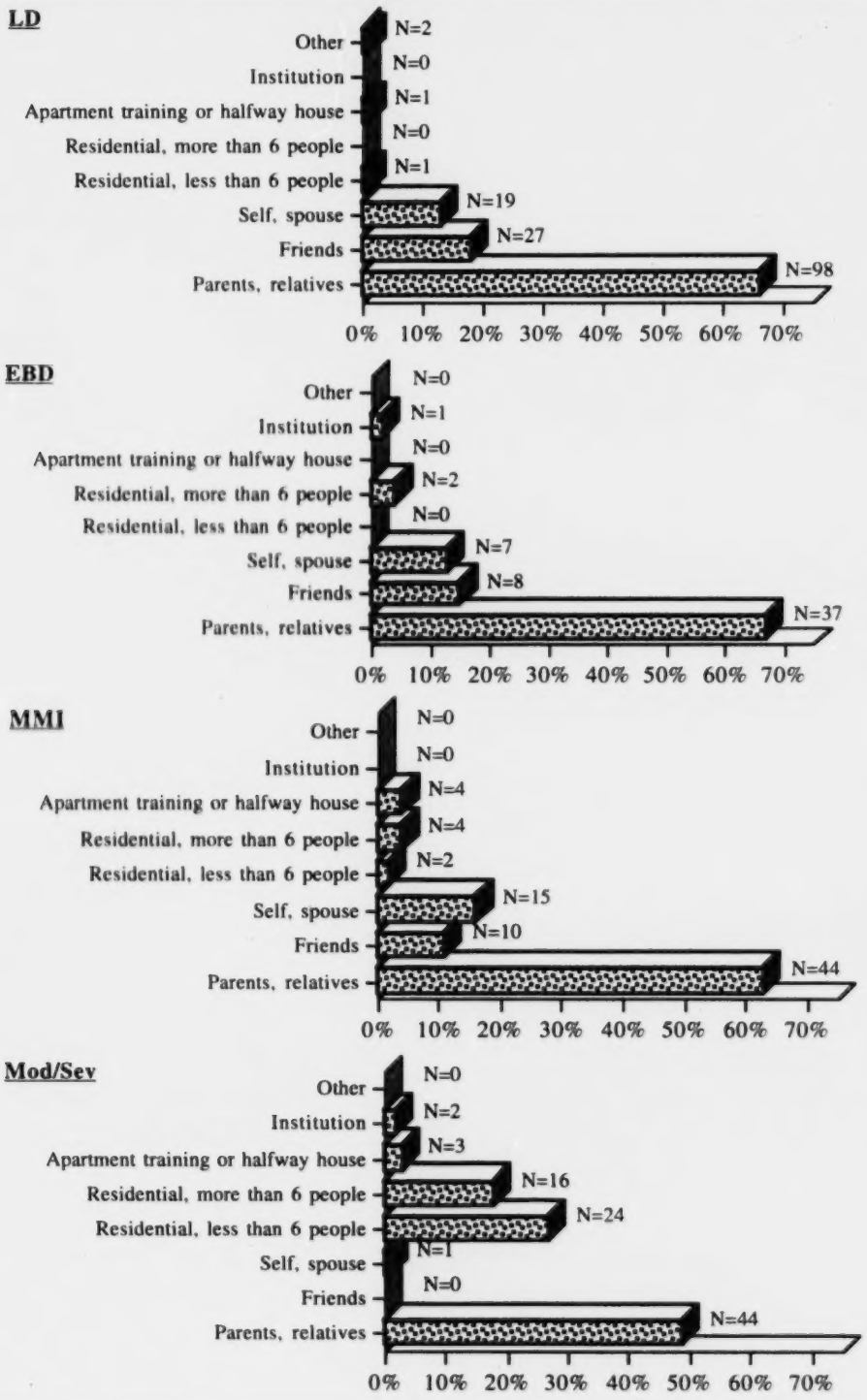


shows the living arrangements across the four disability groups.

Although young adults in the moderate/severe disability group were the most likely to live outside of their family homes (51%), only one person could be considered to be living "independently" (i.e. with friends, spouse, or alone). The remainder of these young adults were receiving some type of formal service through a residential program. Of the forty-six young adults in the moderate/severe group who were not living with family members, twenty-seven were living in a residential setting with five or fewer other housemates. Only two were living in a regional treatment center (i.e. institution). Most of the young adults from the other three disability groups who did not live with their parents or relatives resided by themselves, lived with their spouse, or lived with friends.

Figure 27 shows that forty-one former students (11%) were on a waiting list

Figure 26: Living Arrangements of Young Adults in Four Disability Groups



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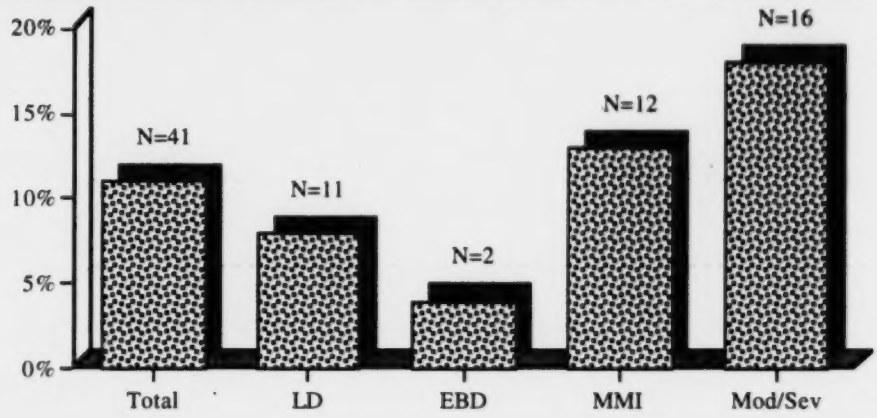
for another place to live. Twenty (49%) of them currently lived with family members while seven (18%) lived in a residence with more than five housemates. While most (61%) of young adults on waiting lists reported that they had been on a list for less than a year, a notable percentage (25%) had been on a waiting list for over two years.

Figure 27: Former Students on Waiting List for New Place to Live



Social Network

Survey Questions

Social network survey items focus on the extent of individuals' social support network as well as their marital and parental status. Questions were:

- Could you tell me the first names and last initial of only those people to whom you feel closest? By this I mean people to whom you feel so close that you couldn't imagine life without them. Who do you feel this close to and how is each person related to you?
- I would also like you to tell me the names of people to whom you feel very close, but not as close as the people you just mentioned. People who are very important to you but who you don't see, talk to, or do things with as often. Who do you feel this close to and how they are related to you?
- Do you have children? If so, how many? Do you use day care?
- Are you married? Have you ever been married?

Findings

The number of people whom individuals identified as being part of their social network (combination of people identified in response to the first two questions above) appear in Figures 28 through 30. Figure 28 shows that approximately one third of the sample had small social networks including four or fewer people. Figure 29 reveals that the percentages of youth with small social networks were consistent across the four disability groups. However, the percentages of youth with large social networks varied by disability group. While over a quarter of the young adults with learning disabilities, mild mental impairments, and moderate/severe disabilities had social networks of nine or more people, only 12% of former students with emotional and behavioral disorders had social networks of this size.

The average (mean) sizes of the social networks of former students and the

Figure 28: Number of People in Social Network of Former Students

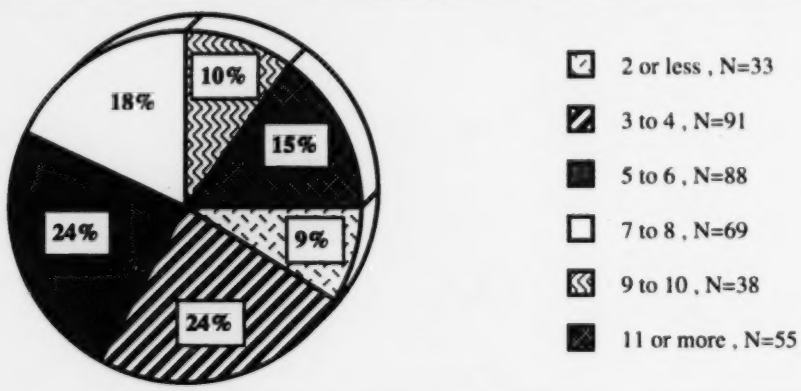


Figure 29: Number of People in Social Networks of Young Adults from Four Disability Groups

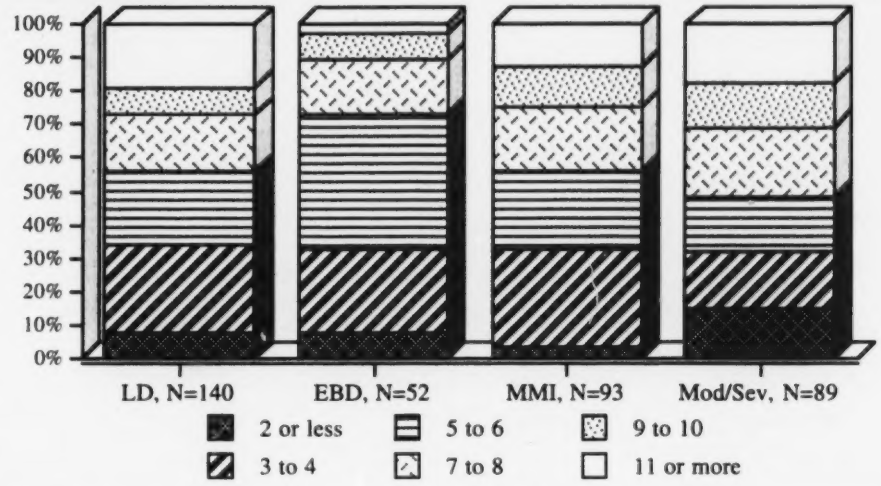
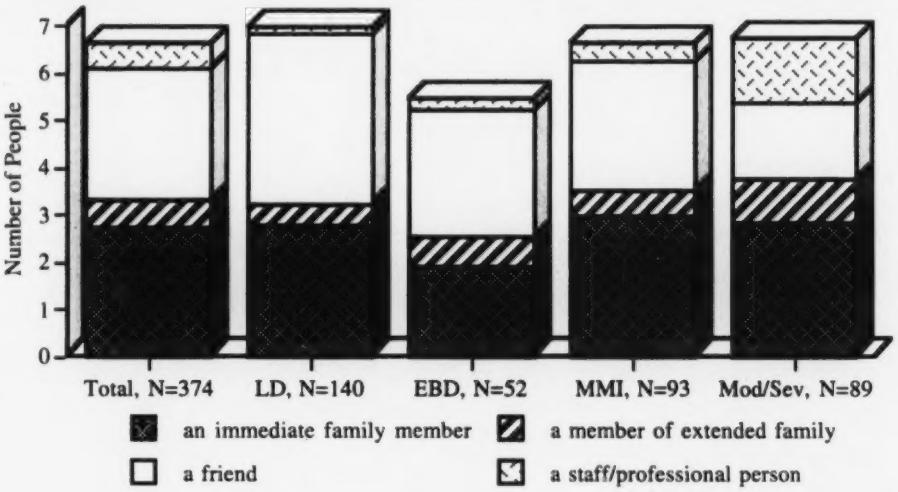


Figure 30: People Whom Young Adults Identified in Their Social Networks



types of individuals who were included appears in Figure 30. Former students with emotional/behavioral disorders had approximately one less person in their social networks than did the young adults in the other three disability groups. Interestingly, this difference was due primarily to the fact that these young adults identified one less family member than did young adults in the other groups. Youth in the moderate/severe disability group had the smallest number of friends and the largest number of staff or professional people in their social networks.

Figures 31 and 32 show the marital and parental status of the sample. Less

Figure 31: Marital Status

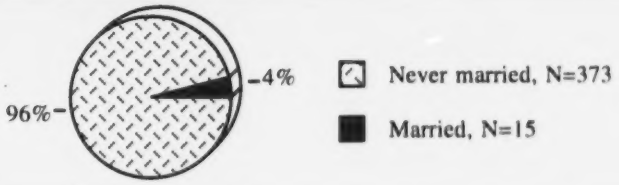
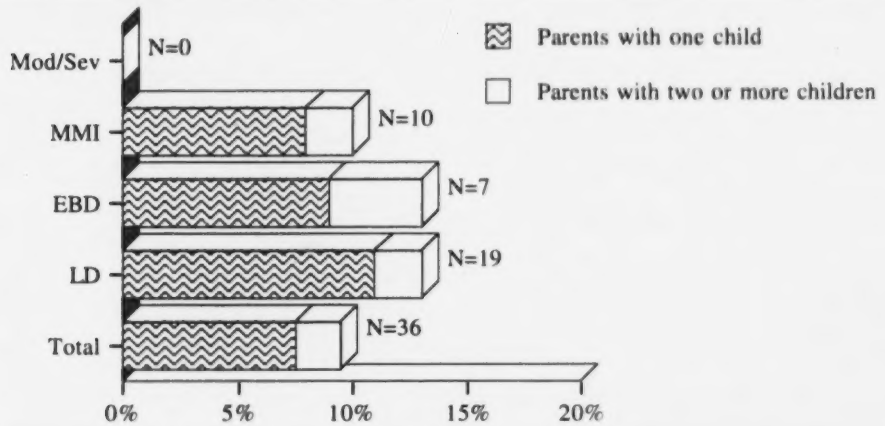


Figure 32: Parental Status



than 4% of the young adults were married at the time of the interview and only 9% had children. Thirteen percent (13%) of former students in the learning disability and emotional/behavioral disorder groups and 11% of young adults in the mild mental impairment group were parents. In contrast, none of the former students in the moderate/severe disability group had children. Table 8 reveals that slightly over one third of the young adults with children used day care services. Nearly 90% reported that they knew how to make arrangements for day care services if they needed them.

Table 8: Use of Day Care and Child Care Needs by Young Adults Who Are Parents

Disability Classification	Number who use day care		Number who know who to call for day care assistance	
	Yes	No	Yes	No
LD	6	13	17	2
EBD	2	5	6	1
MMI	5	5	9	1

Recreation and Leisure

Survey question

The recreation and leisure item assessed the degree to which individuals are involved in formal activities in their communities, informal activities in their homes, and social activities with others. Interviewers asked:

- What recreational and leisure activities have you done in the past seven days?

Findings

Table 9 shows that participation of former students in seventeen different recreation/leisure activities. These activities were clustered into three main groups: a.) Informal/Home – activities that are informal and are mainly done in the home; b.) Formal/Community – activities that are structured and are typically done in a public facility or setting; c.) Social – activities that involve social engagement with others.

Table 9: Recreation and Leisure Activities

	Disability Classification									
	LD		EBD		MMI		Mod/Sev		TOTAL	
Activity	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No
Informal/Home										
Watched TV, listened to radio or records	140	7	53	2	91	4	88	0	**372**	**17**
Went shopping	99	48	39	16	73	22	69	19	**280**	**105**
Worked on hobbies (e.g. puzzles, art activity, playing instrument, gardening)	75	72	26	29	50	45	40	48	**191**	**194**
Went to a park or on a walk	101	46	37	18	63	32	73	15	**274**	**111**
Played cards or table games	69	76	31	24	42	51	28	58	**170**	**209**
Read, looked at books/magazines	118	29	44	10	72	23	62	26	**296**	**88**
Sat around resting	118	29	54	1	86	9	83	5	**341**	**44**
Formal/Community										
Participated in sports	73	74	29	26	37	58	49	39	**188**	**197**
Attended a community event (e.g. fair, local festival, etc.)	54	91	23	31	36	59	41	45	**154**	**226**
Went to a meeting of a club or organization	27	120	4	58	13	81	13	74	**57**	**325**
Went to a religious service	42	105	15	40	33	62	41	47	**131**	**254**
Social										
Went out to eat	115	31	46	9	72	23	70	18	**303**	**18**
Went to a sporting event	44	103	19	36	19	76	19	68	**179**	**206**
Went to a movie, concert, or play	62	85	27	28	50	45	40	48	**179**	**206**
Went on a date or to a party	98	49	25	30	33	62	14	74	**170**	**215**
Visited a friend	129	17	45	10	71	24	45	43	**290**	**94**
Other										
Any other leisure activity	12	134	6	48	14	81	15	73	**47**	**336**

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The extent to which young adults participated in the "Informal/Home" and "Formal/Community" activities generally were consistent across the four disability groups. However, young adults with learning disabilities participated in more "Social" activities than the others in the sample. Young adults with learning disabilities were particularly more likely to have gone out on a date or to a party, or to have visited with a friend than former students in the other disability groups.

Community Participation and Citizenship

Survey Questions

The community participation and citizenship questions focused on mobility around the community, involvement with community services, participation in citizenship activities, and knowledge of emergency services. They were:

- When you want to go somewhere, how do you usually get there?
- Do you go shopping to buy things on your own? Do you pay for things independently?
- What part of your living expenses do you pay out of your own earnings?
- Do you presently have a savings account? If yes, do you use it independently?
- Do you presently have a checking account? If yes, do you use it independently?
- Have you ever voted in an election for a political candidate?
- Would you know where to go or who to call if you were a victim of a crime or if you needed medical help?

Findings

Figures 33 and 34 show the percentages of former students who used different types of transportation as their primary way of moving around their communities. There were clear distinctions between the four disability groups. Whereas over 60% of young adults with learning disabilities and emotional/behavioral disorders drove a car or motorcycle, only 33% of the former students with mild mental impairments and only 1% of young adults with moderate/severe disabilities did so. Use of public transportation was fairly consistent across the four disability groups but was very closely tied to the communities in which the former students lived. Very few former students in rural areas used public transportation simply because this option was not available to them. Dependency on family and friends for transportation was especially pronounced for young adults

Figure 33: Type of Transportation that Former Students Used Most Often

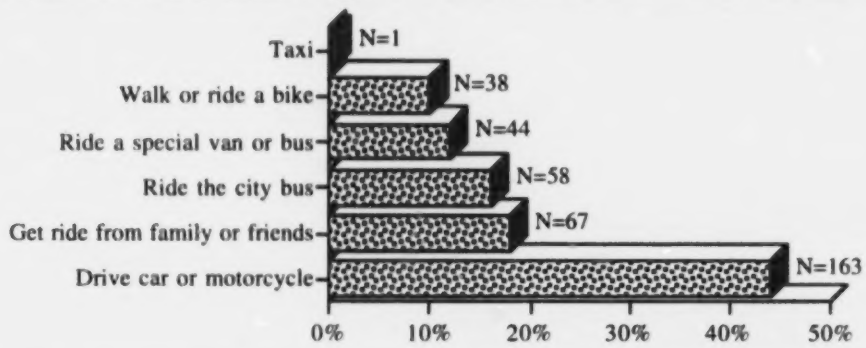
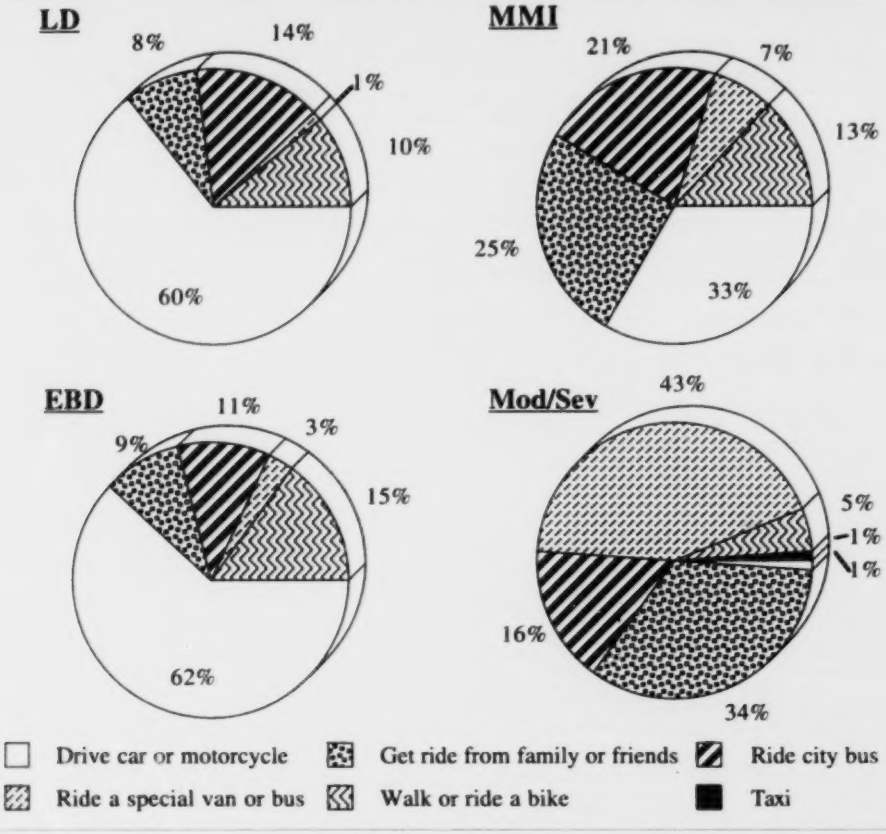


Figure 34: Type of Transportation Used Most Often by Disability Group



with mild mental impairments and moderate/severe disabilities. A large proportion (43%) of individuals in the moderate/severe disability group and a small percentage (7%) of former students with mild mental impairments used special buses or vans for their primary mode of transportation.

Figures 35 and 36 show the percentages of young adults who go shopping to purchase their own personal items. These figures also reveal the extent to which individuals are independent in paying for products. Almost all (88%) of the former students who did not go shopping were in the mild mental impairment and moderate severe disability groups. Sixty percent (60%) of former students in the moderate/severe disability group shopped for personal items but needed assistance to make purchases.

The proportion of personal living expenses that individuals paid for out of their own earnings appears in Figure 37. Nearly one quarter of the sample paid for all of their living expenses, half paid for some, and the remaining quarter paid for none. Over 95% of those who paid for "all" of their living expenses worked in competitive employment or in the military and earned over $125.00 per week. Individuals who were either unemployed or worked on low paying jobs dominated the "none" category.

Figure 35: Percentage of Young Adults with Disabilities Who Go Shopping and Pay for Products

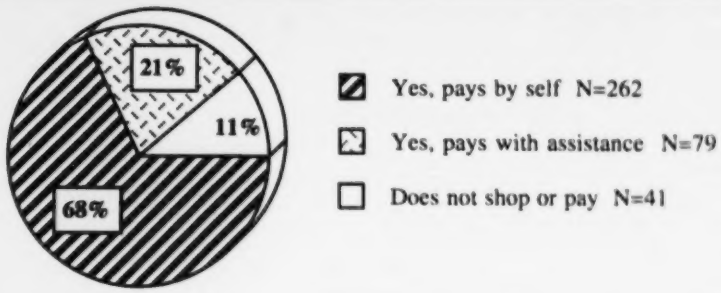


Figure 36: Percentage of Young Adults from Four Disability Groups Who Go Shopping and Pay for Products

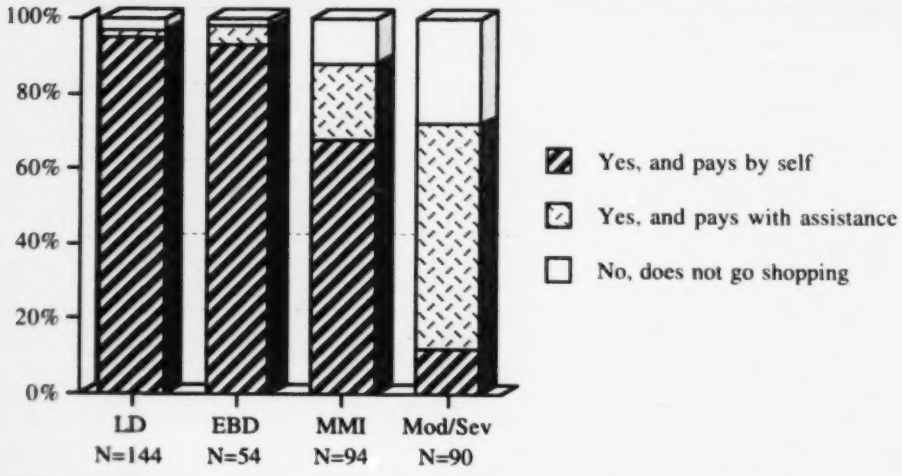
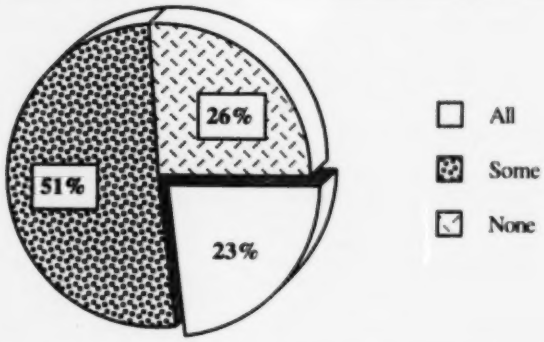


Figure 37: Portion of Living Expenses that Young Adults Pay Out of Their Own Earnings



Figures 38 through 41 portray the extent to which the young adults used banking services in their communities. Considerably more young adults had savings accounts (61%) than checking accounts (43%). Thirty percent (30%) of the sample had both a saving and checking account. Young adults in the moderate/severe group were most likely to maintain their accounts with assistance.

Figure 38: Percentage of Young Adults Who Have a Savings Account

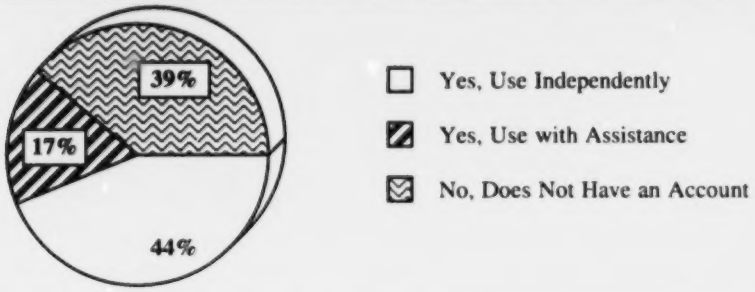


Figure 39: Percentage of Young Adults from Four Disability Groups Who Have a Savings Account

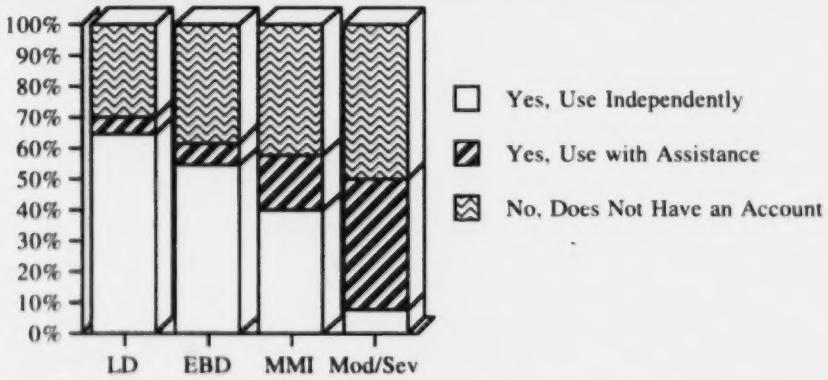


Figure 40: Percentage of Young Adults Who Have a Checking Account

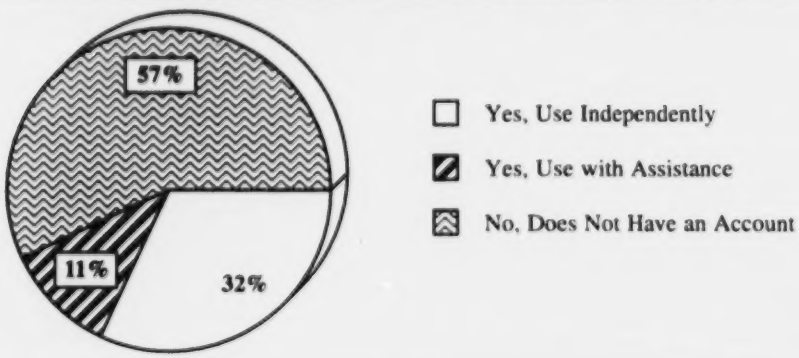
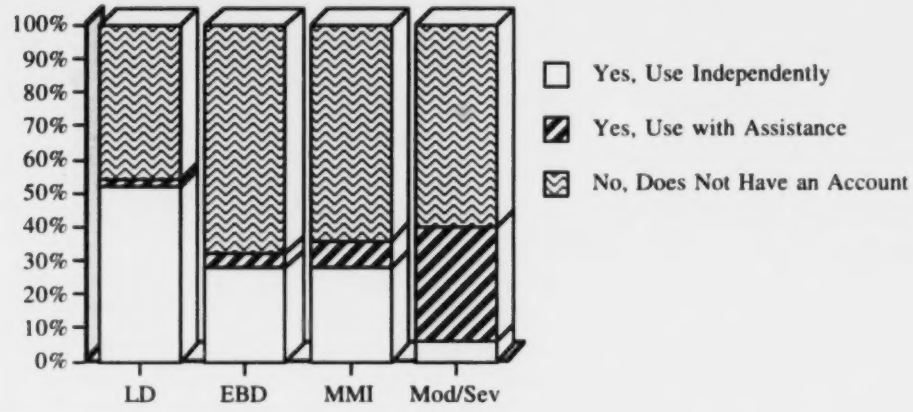


Figure 41: Percentage of Young Adults from Four Disability Groups Who Have a Checking Account



The percentages of young adults who have voted in an election appear in Figures 42 and 43. Young adults in the three "mild" disability groups were far more likely to have voted than young adults with moderate/severe disabilities, despite the fact that young adults in the moderate/severe disability group were the oldest in age and would have had more opportunities to vote.

Figure 42: Percentage of Young Adults with Disabilities Who Have Voted in an Election

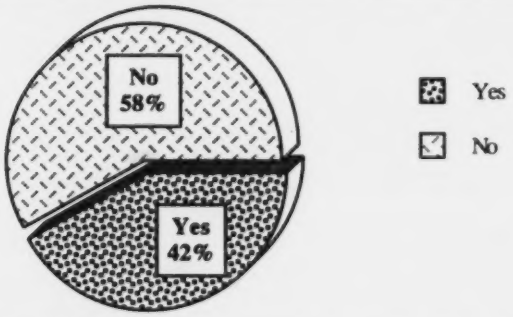


Figure 44 shows the former students' knowledge of emergency resources in their communities. Once again, there was a wide discrepancy in the responses of individuals from different disability groups. While 90% of students in the three "mild" disability groups knew where to go or who to call in the case of a medical emergency or if a victim of a crime, only about a third of the former students with moderate/severe disabilities were aware of what to do.

Figure 43: Percentage of Young Adults from Four Disability Groups Who Have Voted in an Election

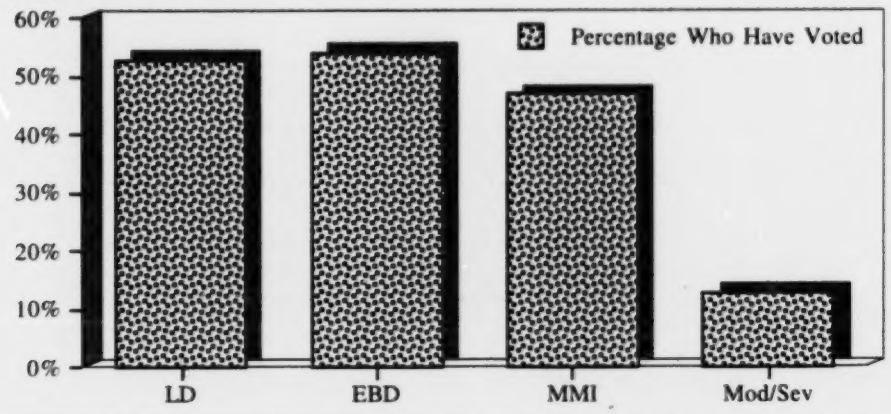
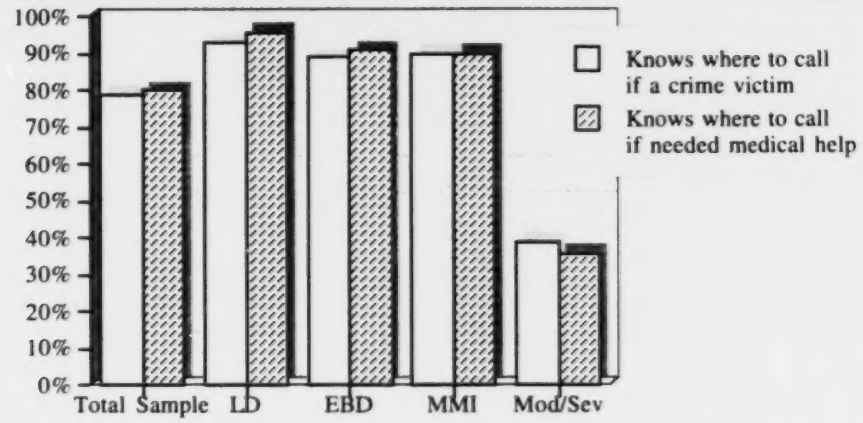


Figure 44: Knowledge of Emergency Resources



Government and Special Services

Survey Questions

Survey items focused on the use of government services and special services targeted to persons with disabilities. Also assessed were the service interests of former students. Interviewers asked:

- Are you receiving service or assistance from any state agency or community service organization?
- Do you receive monthly income support from any government programs?
- Do you receive any specialized services?
- Would you know where to go or who to call if you needed assistance with education or training or if you needed employment assistance?
- What services would be of interest to you if available?

Findings

Table 10 shows the number of young adults who were receiving services from the Division of Rehabilitation Services, County Social Services, and/or a community service organization (e.g. Arc, rehabilitation facility, etc.). It is important to note that interviewers asked whether or not the young adults were

Table 10: Number of Former Students Who Use Three Types of Services

	Disability Classification									
	LD		EBD		MMI		Mod/Sev		Total	
Source of Assistance	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No
Division of Rehabilitation Services	14	134	2	53	24	70	13	77	**53**	**334**
An adult service organization	2	146	5	50	30	64	66	24	**103**	**284**
County Social Services	11	137	9	46	35	59	63	27	**118**	**269**

currently receiving services and did not ask whether or not these services had been received at any time since their high school departure. In total, 14% of former students were receiving services from the Division of Rehabilitation Services, 27% were receiving assistance from a community service organization, and 30% were receiving assistance from County Social Services. Young adults in the mild mental impairment and moderate/severe disability groups were more likely to be receiving services than former students in the other two disability groups.

Tables 11 and 12 document the extent to which students were currently accessing government assistance programs. A much greater percentage of former students with moderate/severe disabilities were the beneficiaries of income support programs than former students in the other three disability groups. Of the six government programs identified in Tables 11 and 12, young adults in this

Table 11: Number of Former Students Who Receive Four Types of Income Assistance

	Disability Classification									
	LD		EBD		MMI		Mod/Sev		Total	
Source of Income	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No
Supplemental Security Income (SSI)	8	140	11	43	34	60	68	20	121	263
Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI)	3	145	2	52	11	83	15	73	31	353
Minnesota Supplemental Assistance (MSA)	0	148	1	53	3	91	21	67	25	359
Aid to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC)	5	143	2	53	4	90	0	88	11	373

sample most often used Medical Assistance (MA) and Supplemental Security Income (SSI).

Table 13 documents the number of former students who were receiving three kinds of specialized services (vocational evaluation, specialized therapies, and specialized medical care). It is important to note that these services were described generically (in contrast to the very specific program information used to describe the government services that were referred to in the proceeding tables). "Vocational evaluation" was the most popular specialized service. Use of specialized therapies and specialized medical care were almost entirely limited to former students with moderate/severe disabilities.

Figure 45 and Table 14 show responses to two questions regarding service

Table 12: Number of Former Students Who Receive Food Stamps and Medical Assistance

	Disability Classification									
	LD		EBD		MMI		Mod/Sev		Total	
Source of Assistance	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No
Food Stamps	7	141	3	51	8	86	1	87	19	365
Medical Assistance (MA)	21	127	11	43	33	61	63	25	128	256

Table 13: Number of Former Students Who Receive Three Types of Specialized Services

	Disability Classification									
	LD		EBD		MMI		Mod/Sev		Total	
Type of Assistance	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No
Vocational Evaluation	22	123	9	46	34	60	40	50	105	279
Specialized Therapies	2	143	4	51	10	83	34	56	50	333
Specialized Medical Care	5	140	3	52	12	81	30	59	50	332

awareness. Over 60% of the sample indicated that they knew where to go or who to call if they needed assistance in obtaining employment or in accessing further education and training programs. The low number of young adults with moderate/severe disabilities who knew how to access these services illustrates the importance of advocacy services to inform these young adults and their families of service options.

The final questions concerning the provision of services involved asking students whether or not they would be interested in receiving eight different types of services if these were available. The data from this question are displayed in Figure 46 and Table 14. Over half of the sample indicated that "Training for a Job" was a service they were interested in receiving. Surprisingly, a slightly greater percentage of those who were currently employed (55%) wanted this service than those who were unemployed (50%).

Service preferences varied by disability group. Young adults with learning disabilities were most interested in training for a job (51%). Young adults with emotional/behavioral disorders were equally interested in training for a job (51%) and choosing a place to live (51%). Arranging recreation and leisure activities was the service that former students in the mild mental impairment group (49%) and the moderate/severe disability group (63%) wanted the most.

Figure 45: Knowledge of Sources of Assistance – Total Sample

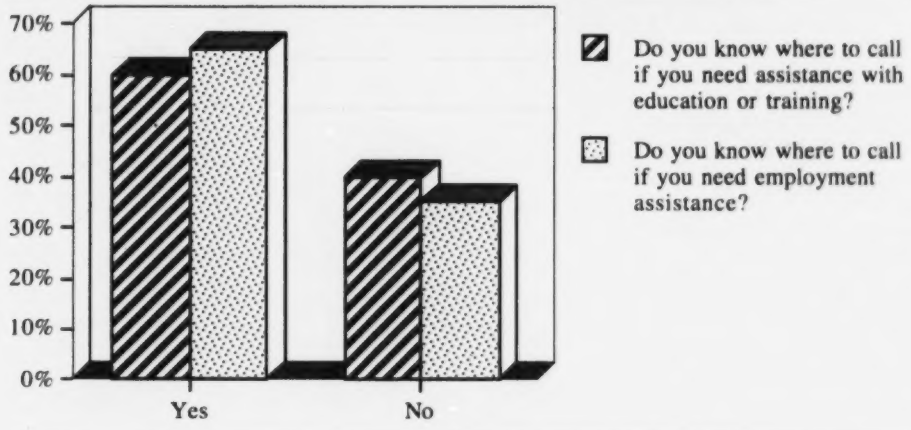
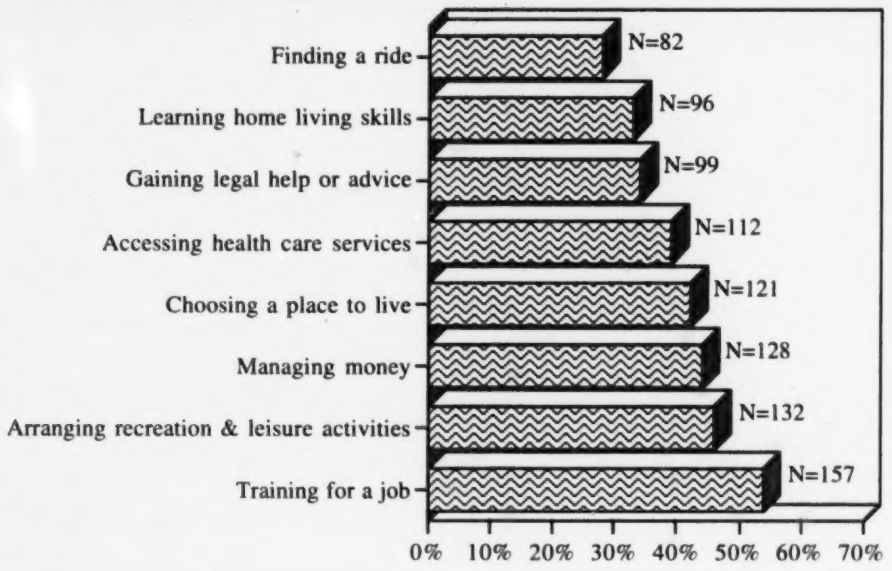


Table 14: Knowledge of Sources of Assistance by Disability Group

	Disability Classification							
	LD		EBD		MMH		Mod/Sev	
Knowledge of Assistance Sources	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No
Needed assistance with education or training	125	25	41	14	53	41	14	76
Needed employment assistance	129	19	47	8	61	32	15	75

Figure 46: Percentage of Young Adults Who Express Interest in Receiving Eight Different Services



Satisfaction

Survey Questions

Personal satisfaction items assessed the extent to which individuals appeared satisfied with their daytime activities, living arrangements, social network, and recreation and leisure activities. Interviewers asked:

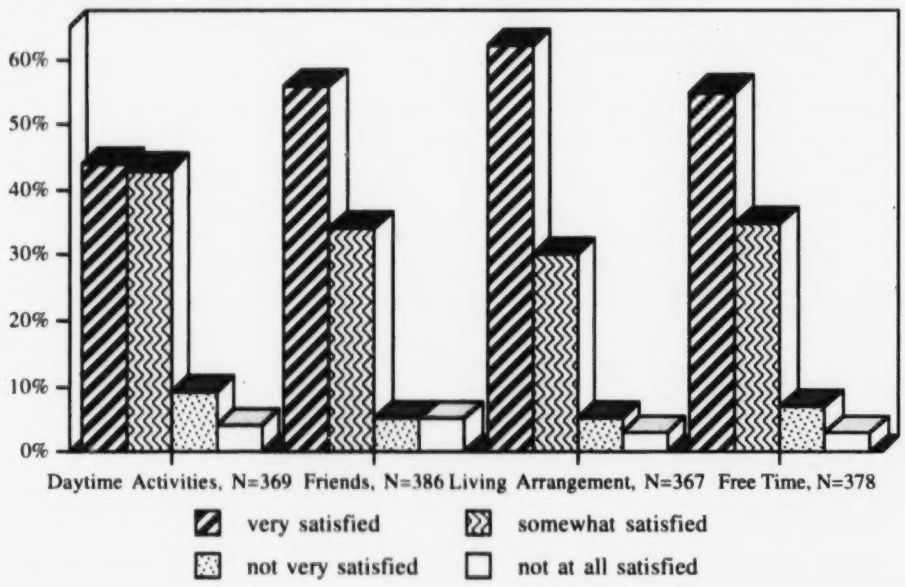
- How satisfied are you with your day time activity?
- How satisfied are you with your living arrangements?
- How satisfied are you with what you do in your free time?
- How satisfied are you with your friendships?

Findings

Each of the satisfaction questions allowed for four possible responses: very satisfied, somewhat satisfied, not very satisfied, or not at all satisfied. The combined responses of the four disability groups appear in Figure 47. The high level of satisfaction across all four areas is striking. Reports of dissatisfaction (i.e. combination of the "not very satisfied" or "not at all satisfied" responses) were limited to 13% in regard to daily activities, 7% in regard to friendships, and 10% in regard to living arrangements and free time activities.

Figure 48 shows the daytime activity satisfaction across the four disability groups. Young adults with mild mental impairments and moderate/severe disabilities had slightly higher satisfaction ratings than young adults in the other two disability groups. Dissatisfaction with daytime activities was closely associated with employment status. Only 9% of employed young adults reported

Figure 47: Satisfaction of Young Adults in Four Life Areas



feeling "not very" or "not at all" satisfied compared to 30% of the unemployed former students.

Of the four life areas, young adults had the highest level of satisfaction with their living arrangements. Over 60% of the former students reporting that they were "very satisfied". Figure 49 shows that young adults with mild mental impairments were most likely to be "very satisfied" with their living status. Former students who lived outside their family home had similar satisfaction ratings as those who lived with their parents and family members.

Friendship satisfaction across the four disability groups appears in Figure

Figure 48: Satisfaction of Young Adults in Four Disability Groups with Daytime Activities

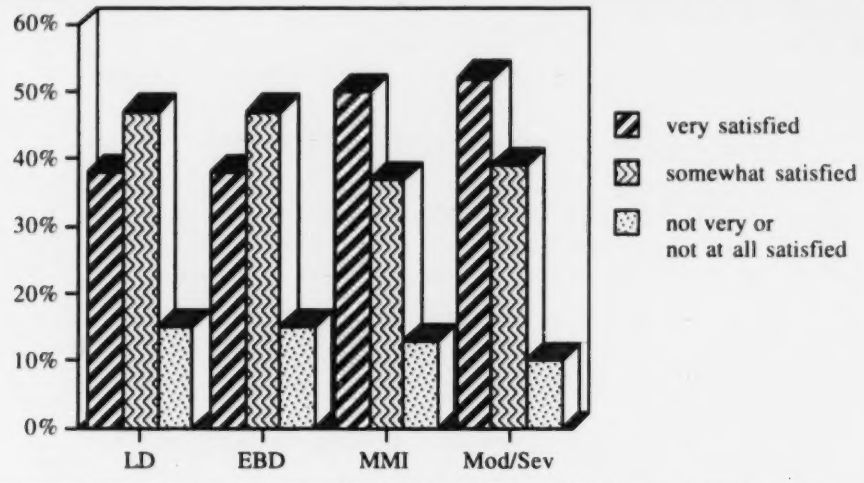
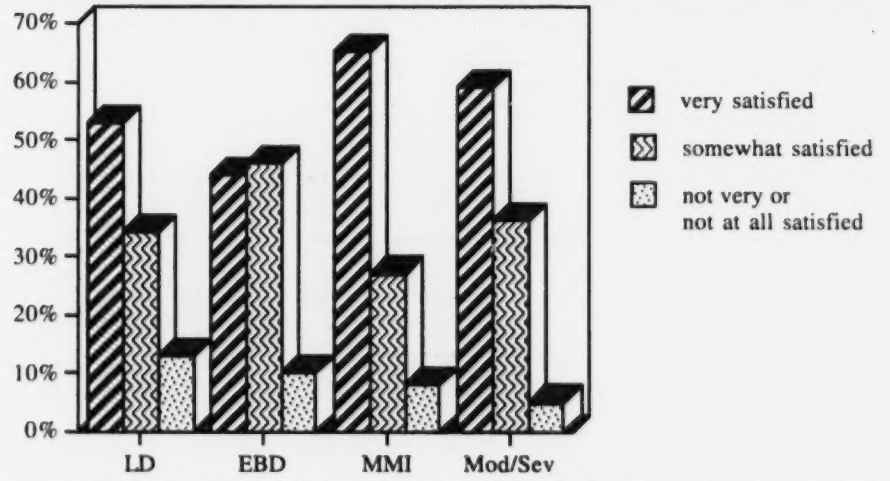


Figure 49: Satisfaction of Young Adults in Four Disability Groups with Living Arrangements



50. It is interesting that former students in the moderate/severe disability group reported slightly lower levels of satisfaction in this area. This result corresponds with the finding that these individuals identified fewer personal friends in their social networks than did young adults in the other three disability groups. All of the young adults who reported that they were "not very satisfied" or "not at all satisfied" with their friendships identified fewer than five friends in their social network.

The data also indicate modest differences between the four groups in terms of satisfaction with free time activities. As Figure 51 shows, a greater proportion of young adults with moderate/severe disabilities were "somewhat satisfied" in comparison to former students in the other groups, who were predominately "very satisfied". Young adults who participated in more recreational/ leisure activities tended to report higher levels of "free time" satisfaction.

Figure 50: Satisfaction of Young Adults in Four Disability Groups with Friendships

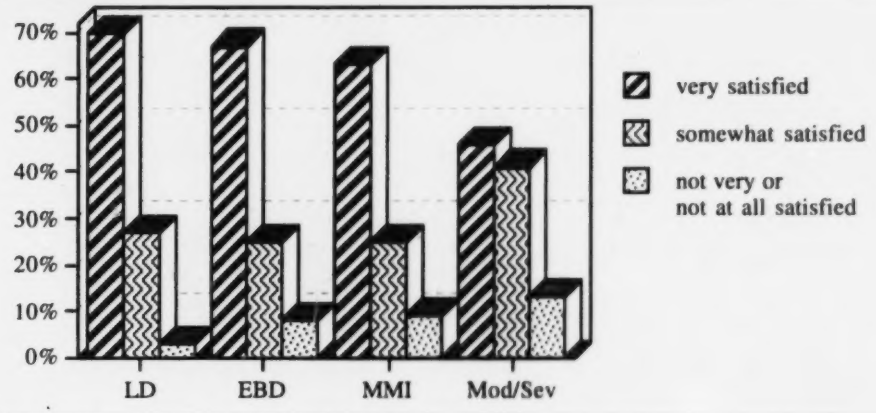
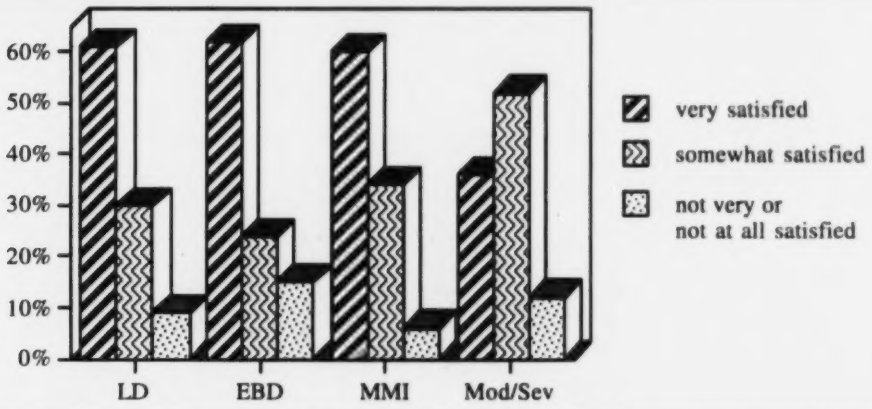


Figure 51: Satisfaction of Young Adults in Four Disability Groups with Their Free Time



Former Students Who Did Not Graduate

Survey Questions

Survey items focused on the reasons why former students did not complete high school and their attempts to obtain a diploma after dropping out. Interviewers asked:

- What was the last grade of high school that you completed?
- How many times have you re-entered a program to earn a high school diploma even if you have not finished?
- Why did you drop out of your original high school program?
- What could have been done differently to have encouraged you to stay in and finish high school [the first time]?
- Have you considered enrollment, applied to, started, or completed a GED program?

Findings

Thirty-one (8%) of the former students in the sample did not graduate from high school. Because prior research has shown that non-graduates face special difficulties in making the transition from school to adult life, these young adults were asked several additional questions.

Before considering the findings, it is important to note the demographic differences between the graduates and non-graduates. Table 15 shows that the non-graduate group differs significantly from graduates in terms of disability composition and regional representation. A third of the non-graduates were former students with emotional/behavior disorders and none were from the mod-

Table 15: Demographic Comparison of Non-graduates to Graduates

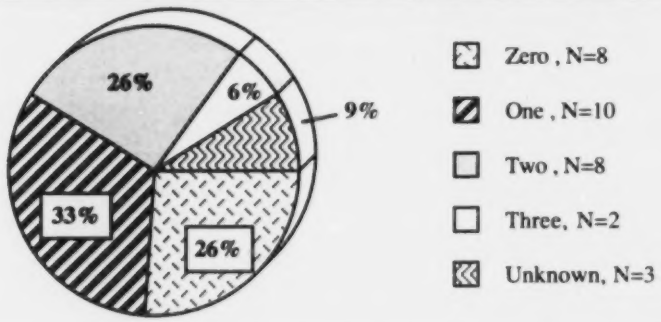
	Non-graduates	Graduates
Disability Group	N (%)	N (%)
LD	12 (39%)	136 (38%)
EBD	10 (32%)	45 (13%)
MMI	9 (29%)	86 (22%)
Mod/Sev	0 (0%)	90 (25%)
Region		
Metro	5 (16%)	115 (32%)
Mid-sized city	9 (29%)	133 (37%)
Rural	17 (55%)	109 (31%)
TOTAL	**31 (8%)**	**357 (92%)**

erate/severe disability group. Additionally, well over half of the non-graduate sample were from rural areas of the state. The higher percentage of rural non-graduates is not an indication that youth from rural areas are more likely to drop out of high school; the disproportionate number of non-graduates from rural areas in this sample is most likely due to rural school districts having more current information on the addresses and phone numbers of their non-graduates in comparison to the other two regions. The composition of graduates and non-graduates in relation to gender, age, and time out of high school were similar.

Over seventy percent of the non-graduates reported dropping out during their sophomore and junior years of high school. Figure 52 shows the number of times that non-graduates re-entered a high school program after dropping out the first time. A little over a fourth of the non-graduates never returned to high school after leaving. Approximately one third had re-entered on two or more occasions.

Interveiwers asked non-graduates why they dropped out of high school and

Figure 52: Number of Times Non-Graduates Re-entered a Program to Earn a High School Diploma After "Dropping Out" the First Time



what could have been done differently to help them remain in school. Both question allowed for open ended responses. Although the responses were highly diverse, some general themes emerged.

The two most common reasons given for dropping out of high school were: a.) a general lack of interest in the school program and b.) issues associated with becoming pregnant and having a child. Less common reasons were: a.) conflicts with parents and b.) being expelled due to breaking school rules. Only one student cited frustration with academic requirements as being the major factor for leaving high school.

Several non-graduates reported that they simply "didn't like school" and wanted to spend their time doing something else. An equal number of non-graduates cited issues associated with parenthood. These issues ranged from wanting to stay home with a child, to a need to work full time to support a child, to missing too many days of school in order to attend to a child's health needs. All seven of the young women who did not graduate and who were parents cited

pregnancy and/or child rearing issues as a reason for not completing high school. Only one of the male non-graduates reported child rearing as a factor in the decision to drop out.

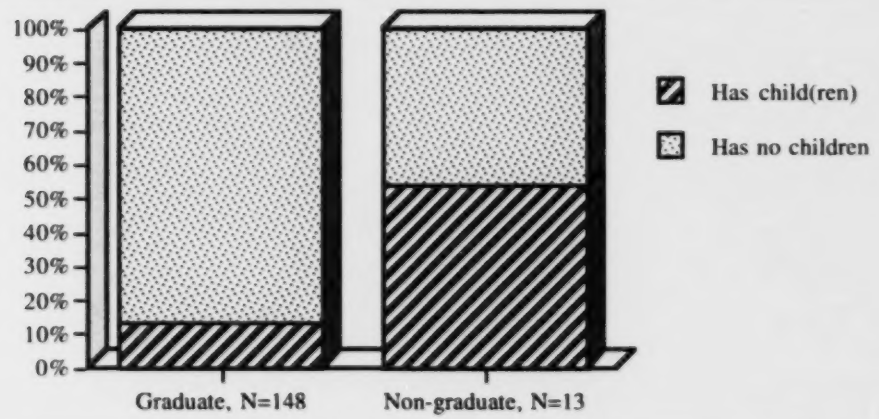
The responses of non-graduates concerning what could have been done differently to help them stay in school varied considerably. Almost a fourth of the non-graduates said that "nothing" could have been done differently. Most of young adults accepted full responsibility for not graduating. One student explicitly stated that he felt that school personnel had done everything they could to help him stay in school.

A few former students blamed the school, with some suggesting that the rules were too inflexible and others believing that teachers did not like them. A smaller number of students felt that more supportive parents would have helped them remain in school. Two students said that if someone could have shown them how hard life was without a high school diploma, they might have been persuaded to finish high school.

Although the non-graduate sample is small, the percentage of young women who had children and did not graduate is dramatic. Figure 53 shows that 56% of the young women who did not graduate had children compared with only 13% of the young women who graduated.

The extent to which the non-graduates in this sample pursued further educa-

Figure 53: Parental Status of Young Adult Women Who Graduated and Dropped Out of High School

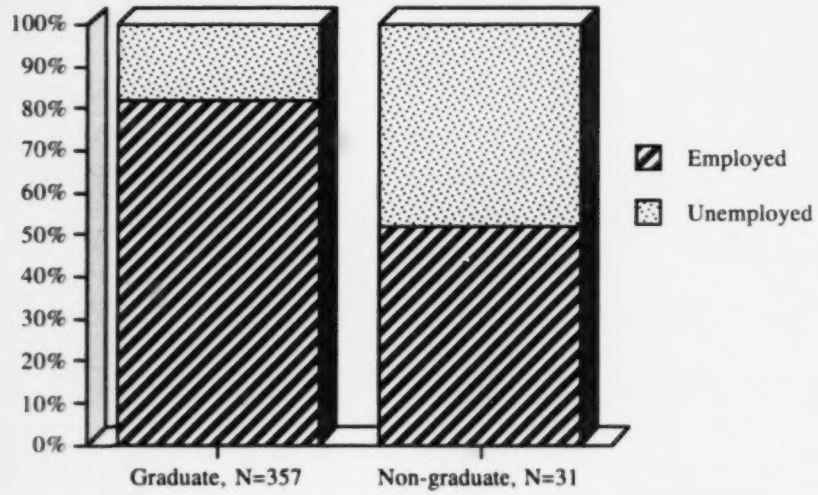


tional opportunities after leaving high school is encouraging. Over half (55%) indicated that they had applied, started, or completed a GED (Graduate Equivalency Diploma) program since leaving high school. One had applied but had not yet started, eleven had started but had not yet completed the program, and five had successfully earned their GED. Two of these five students who earned their GED had gone on to earn degrees from a technical college.

Widely disparate sample sizes make it difficult to reasonably compare the

status of graduates and non-graduates. In general, the data from this study indicate that graduates experience slightly more desirable outcomes across all of the areas of adult life discussed in the proceeding sections. However, in the area of employment the discrepancy between graduates and non-graduates is considerable. Figure 54 shows an unemployment rate of 48% among non-graduates compared to 18% among graduates.

Figure 54: Employment Status of Graduates and Non-Graduates



High School Experiences

Survey Questions

Several survey items focused on the high school work experiences and extracurricular activities of former students. Additional questions addressed the extent to which individuals appeared satisfied with their high school preparation. Interviewers asked:

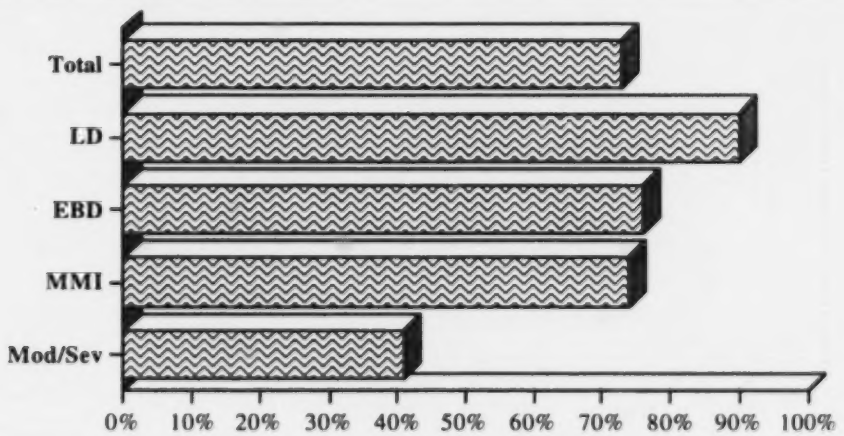
- Did you have paying jobs while you were in high school (including summer jobs)? If yes, how many?
- Which extracurricular activities were you involved in during your high school years?
- In general, how satisfied are you with the job training you received in high school?
- In general, how satisfied are you with the academic training you received in high school?
- In general, how satisfied are you with the training you received in high school to prepare you to live independently?

Findings

Figure 55 shows that seventy-three percent (73%) of former students had been employed on at least one paying job prior to leaving high school. Although strong relationships between job experiences in high school and employment after high school departure have been reported in other postschool follow-up investigations, no relationship existed between these two variables in this study. Former students who had high school work experience were no more likely to be employed nor were they more likely to work at better paying jobs than those who did not have jobs in high school.

Table 16 shows the extent to which the young adults in the sample partici-

Figure 55: Percentage of Young Adults Who Had at Least One Job Before Leaving High School



pated in seven types of extracurricular activities while attending high school. The most popular activities were athletics and social activities. Young adults with learning disabilities participated in extracurricular activities to a much greater extent than individuals in other disability groups. Additionally, former students who graduated from high school were far more involved in high school extracurricular activities than those who did not graduate.

Table 16: Number of Young Adults Who Participated in Various Extracurricular Activities While Attending High School

	Disability Classification									
	LD		EBD		MMH		Mod/Sev		TOTAL	
Activity	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No
Athletics	65	82	20	35	31	64	15	73	**131**	**254**
Music	27	120	10	45	14	81	1	87	**52**	**333**
Speech, Drama, Debate	9	137	4	51	4	91	0	88	**17**	**367**
Social Activities (e.g. school dances, pep rallies)	76	71	30	25	45	50	29	58	**180**	**204**
Newspaper or School Yearbook	14	133	4	51	4	89	0	88	**22**	**361**
Vocational Arts	24	121	5	50	10	84	1	87	**40**	**342**
Other	21	125	3	52	17	73	4	76	**45**	**326**

The responses to questions concerning the degree of satisfaction of young adults with their high school programs are depicted in Figures 56 through 59. In general, young adults perceived their high school programs very positively. Over sixty percent of the sample indicated they were very satisfied or somewhat satisfied with all three areas of preparation. As might be expected, high school graduates rated their programs more favorably than did former students who did not graduate.

Figure 56: Satisfaction of Young Adults with High School Training

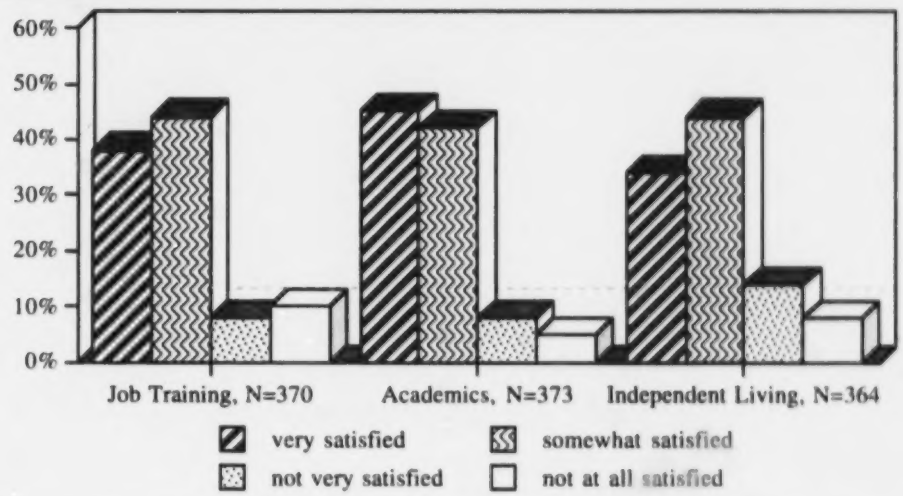


Figure 57: Satisfaction of Young Adults in Four Disability Groups with Job Training

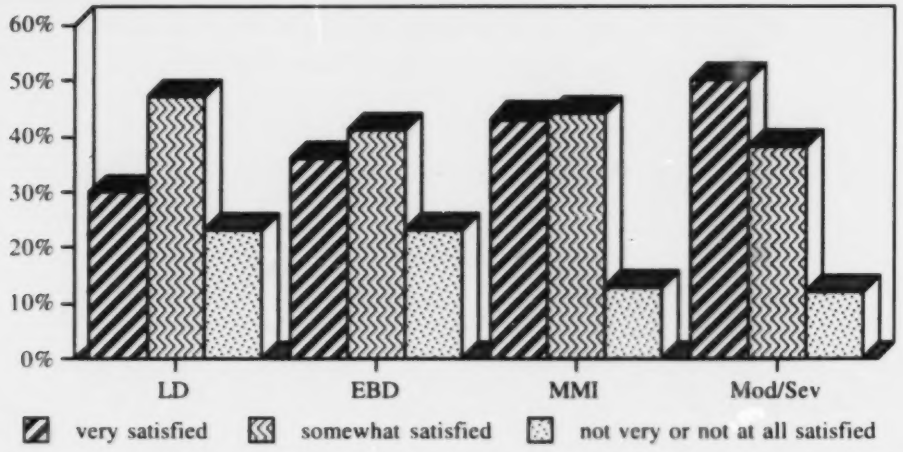


Figure 58: Satisfaction of Young Adults in Four Disability Groups with Academic Training

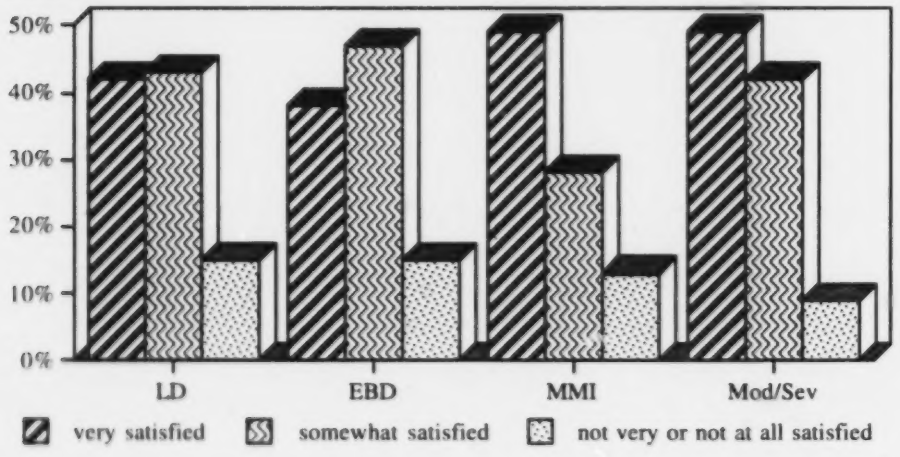
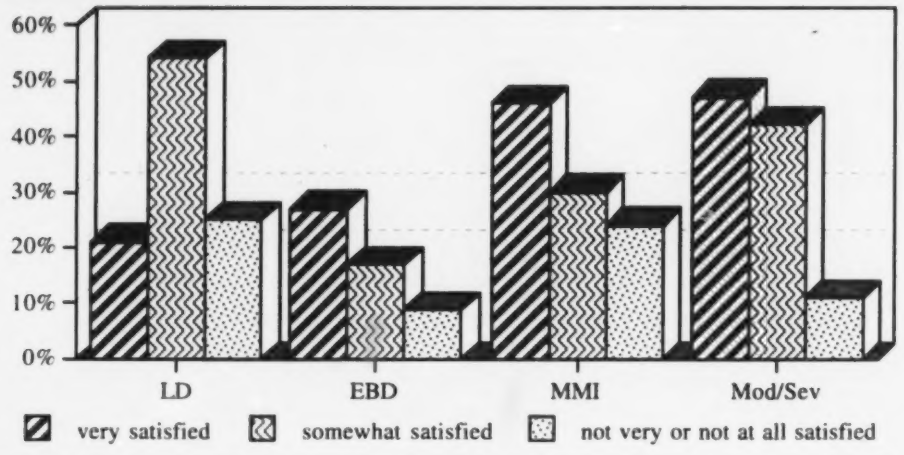


Figure 59: Satisfaction of Young Adults in Four Disability Groups with Independent Living Training



Part IV: Summary

The Minnesota Postschool Follow-up Study collected information on the status and experiences of 388 young adults with disabilities who received special education services while attending high school. These former students left school after the passage of state legislation that mandated interagency transition planning to assist young adults with disabilities in planning for their lives after school and arranging necessary services to reach personal goals (MS 120.17 Subd. 3a). The section below summarizes the major findings from this study.

Major Findings

Employment

At the time of the interviews eighty percent (80%) of the young adults were employed; 50% in competitive jobs, 16% in sheltered employment, and 13% in supported employment. Thirty-eight percent (38%) had experienced a period of unemployment since leaving high school. Individuals who worked on competitive jobs that involved 35 or more hours per week were more likely to receive job benefits and promotions and typically earned $200.00 or more per week. Former students most often obtained competitive jobs through personal contacts (i.e. the "self/family/friend network").

Postsecondary Education and Training

Twenty-eight percent (28%) of the former students had started one of four postsecondary programs (apprenticeship, technical college, community college, university/four year college) since leaving high school. Young adults with learning disabilities were far more likely to pursue postsecondary education/training than the other young adults in the sample.

Living Arrangements

Most young adults lived in their family home one to five years after leaving high school and very few participated in programs that prepare individuals to live on their own. Less than one percent of the former students resided in a Regional Treatment Center.

Social Network

Nearly two-thirds (66%) of the sample had social networks ranging from three to eight people. Former students with emotional/ behavior disorders had the smallest social networks primarily because they identified fewer immediate family members than former students in the other disability groups. Young adults

in the moderate/severe disability group had the fewest number of personal friends in their social networks, but included more staff and professionals than the other young adults. Very few of the young adults in this sample were married and a relatively small percentage (9%) had children.

Recreation and Leisure Activities

The two most popular recreation/leisure activities were "watching TV/listening to music" and "going out to eat". Young adults with learning disabilities were more likely to spend their free time engaged in social activities than others in the sample.

Community Participation

Transportation around the community varied considerably by disability group. Most young adults in the learning disability and emotional/behavior disorder groups drove a car or motorcycle while the majority of young adults in the mild mentally impairment and moderate/severe disability groups either used a special bus or van or were dependent on family and friends for transportation. The majority of former students shopped for personal items, paid for some or all of their living expenses, and had either a saving or a checking account. Only 42% of the former students had voted in an election, while over 80% knew who to contact in the case of a medical emergency or if a victim of a crime.

Government and Special Services

The use of state and community services was generally low. The percentage of former students who currently received services from the Division of Rehabilitation Services, County Social Services, and a community service organization were 14%, 30%, and 27% respectively. The limited use of the Division of Rehabilitation Services is surprising given that over half of the sample expressed interest in receiving job training services and over 60% indicated that they knew how to get assistance for education, training, and employment. The most popular government assistance programs were the Supplemental Security Income (SSI) and Medical Assistance programs. However, these were mostly used by young adults in the moderate/severe disability group.

Satisfaction

The former students overwhelmingly expressed satisfaction with their lives in terms of daytime activities, friendships, living arrangements, and use of free time.

Young Adults Who Did Not Graduate

The most common reasons why former students did not finish high school was a lack of interest in the school program and difficulties associated with pregnancy and child rearing. Over two thirds of non-graduates re-entered high school at least one time after first dropping out. As a group, non-graduates had

a much higher unemployment rate than graduates. Females who became pregnant while in high school were at special risk for not graduating.

High School Experiences

Most young adults had at least one paying job before leaving high school. However, having a job in high school was not associated with employment after high school. Athletics and social activities (e.g. dances, pep rallies,etc.) were the most popular extracurricular activities. Young adults in the learning disability group were more likely to have participated in extracurricular functions than other former students. Young adults expressed a high degree of satisfaction with their high school preparation.

Comparison of Findings from the Minnesota Postschool Follow-up Study with Findings From Other Follow-up Studies

Evaluating the quality of postschool outcomes is inherently a relative process. To assess whether the findings from this investigation are positive or negative requires comparative information from other samples of former students. For example, knowing that a similar sample of young adults with disabilities had an unemployment rate of 50% would place the 20% unemployment rate of this sample in perspective.

The final section of this report compares the findings from this study to findings from five previous postschool follow-up investigations. For purposes of clarity, the current study will be referred to as the "MPFS" for Minnesota Postschool Follow-up Study. Four of the previous follow-up studies concerned young adults in Minnesota while the fifth was completed on a national sample. Although differences in the demographic composition of these samples and differences in the way in which certain questions were phrased precludes an exact comparison of findings, there is enough similarity among the studies to make meaningful comparisons. The previous follow-up studies are described below and comparisons with the current study are discussed.

Minnesota University Affiliated Program (MUAP) on Developmental Disabilities - 1988

In 1987 the Minnesota University Affiliated Program (MUAP) on Developmental Disabilities collected postschool outcome information on 165 former students with disabilities who left school during the 1983-1984 and 1985-86 school years. The sample was comprised of former students with disabilities from rural, suburban, and urban communities in Minnesota. The MUAP sample had equal percentages of former students with learning disabilities (2% more) and emotional/behavior disorders (3% less), a smaller percentage of young adults with mild mental impairments (18% less), and a larger percentage of former students with moderate/severe disabilities (13% more). Former students in both

samples had been out of school for approximately equal lengths of time and had nearly the same percentages of high school graduates. Although transition planning was not legally mandated for MUAP participants, the study reported that most of the former students had participated in an interagency transition planning process prior to their school departure.

Findings in the area of employment were very similar in the two studies. The unemployment rates were virtually identical, although the MUAP study had more individuals in competitive employment and the military (61%) than the current investigation (51%). The current study had more young adults in supported employment (13%) than the MUAP study (2%). Sheltered employment levels were consistent across the two studies.

The quality of jobs in terms of wages, work hours, and job benefits were also very similar. Although individuals in the MPFS earned higher wages per hour, these differences appear to be primarily attributable to inflation. Fifty-four percent (54%) of working young adults in the current study earned minimum wage or higher compared to 57% of the MUAP sample. Work hours were nearly identical in the two samples - over 75% of employed former students in both studies worked more than 20 hours per week. The percentage of former students receiving wage increases, bonuses, paid vacation, and more job responsibilities were nearly identical in the two studies. However, twenty percent (20%) of employed young adults in the current study received some type of health insurance compared to just 11% in the MUAP investigation.

The levels of participation in postsecondary education and training programs were similar for the two samples. In both studies only a small percentage of former students enrolled in apprenticeship, community college and university/four year college programs. However, a slightly larger percentage (23%) of young adults in the current investigation had either started or completed a technical college program in comparison to the MUAP study (16%).

Two additional comparisons between these two studies are worth noting. First, 33% of the former students in the MUAP sample reported living independently (i.e. living alone or living with a spouse or friends) compared to only 23% of the current sample. Second, a greater percentage of young adults in the current study expressed interest in receiving a variety of services (e.g. training for a job, legal assistance, etc.) than former students in the MUAP study.

The Minnesota Secondary School Follow-up System (SSFS) - 1992

The Minnesota Secondary School Follow-up System is a data collection system used by local education agencies. The Minnesota Research and Development Center for Vocational Education at the University of Minnesota originally developed the system through a Minnesota Department of Education contract. The Minnesota Department of Education currently maintains this system. The findings reported here are based on data regarding: a) former students from the general population (i.e. most do not have disabilities) from the class of 1991; and b) former students with disabilities who left school during the 1989-1990 school year. "SSFS" refers to findings from this system, the "Secondary School

Follow-up System."

The MPFS employment rate (80%) of compares favorably to the employment rate of the general population of students identified in the SSFS (55%). However, employed young adults in the SSFS sample appear to earn higher wages than their counterparts in the MPFS sample. Sixty percent (60%) of those with jobs in the SSFS sample earned over $5.00 per hour compared to 46% of employed former students in the MPFS sample. The employment and wage rates for former students with disabilities in the SSFS sample were comparable to those in the MPFS sample.

The most striking differences between the SSFS study and the MPFS were the percentage of former students who were enrolled in postsecondary education and training programs. Over 70% of young adults from the SSFS sample (general population) had attended a postsecondary program within the first year of their departure from high school. This contrasts sharply with the 32% participation rate of former students in the MPFS sample. The SSFS data on the postsecondary enrollment rates of young adults with disabilities were consistent with the MPFS study findings.

Thurlow, Bruininks, Wolman, & Steffens (1989)

Thurlow, Bruininks, Wolman, and Steffens collected postschool outcome data on a sample of 106 former students with moderate, severe, and profound levels of mental retardation. These young adults had left special schools (i.e. schools comprised totally of students with disabilities) in suburban communities from 1982 to 1986. The results of this investigation provide a good comparison measure for young adults in the moderate/severe disability group of the current study. In this section, all references to the MPFS sample will be limited to young adults in the moderate/severe disability group.

The percentage of former students in both studies working in competitive and sheltered employment were nearly equal. The major difference in employment status was the percentage of young adults engaged in supported employment: a significant number of individuals (19%) in the MPFS sample received support on community jobs compared to few (5%) in the Thurlow study. It is reasonable to conclude that the efforts to develop supported employment options over the past ten years have enabled a considerable number of young adults with moderate/severe disabilities to work as part of the community work force.

The two samples practically mirror one another in terms of where the young adults lived. Most individuals remained living in the family home (49% – MPFS, 43% – Thurlow) and or lived in residential settings (45% – MPFS, 47% – Thurlow). The major distinction between the two samples was the size of the residential setting. While the data do not correspond exactly, it is clear that the young adults in the current study live in community residences with fewer housemates. Thurlow et al. report that the average (mean) number of people living in the residences was 18.2. In the current study, 60% of the former students living residential placement had five or fewer housemates. These findings strongly suggest that young adults with developmental disabilities who are leav-

ing school today have access to community residential options with smaller numbers of residents than in previous years.

Both investigations collected data associated with social network, recreation and leisure activities, and community participation. The outcomes were similar across the two studies. Many young adults with moderate/severe disabilities are able to participate in community life (e.g. shop, use banking services, attend community events, etc.) if provided with proper supports. For example, in both studies approximately half of the young adults had a savings account (50% in MPFS, 58% in Thurlow). In the MPFS study 84% of those with a savings account needed assistance to use it while Thurlow et al. report that 78% of their sample required assistance.

Respondents in the Thurlow sample were asked similar personal satisfaction questions as the MPFS sample. Both studies reported high degrees of personal satisfaction with daytime activities, friends, free time activities, and living arrangements.

Bruininks, Thurlow, Lewis, & Larson (1988)

Bruininks et al. collected outcome information on a group of 486 young adults with disabilities who left high school between 1977 and 1984. Seventy percent (70%) of the sample were young adults with learning disabilities. The remaining 30% were divided between individuals with mild mental retardation, emotional disabilities, and speech impairments. Since data in this study were presented categorically, comparisons can be made with young adults in the learning disability, mild mental impairment, emotional/behavior disorder groups of the MPFS sample. Three major demographic differences between the studies are worth noting. The Bruininks sample was comprised entirely of young adults from suburban communities, included a much higher proportion of males (73%), and included individuals who had been out of school a longer period of time (1-8 years). Prior research has shown that each of these factors may be associated with more desirable postschool outcomes.

The major similarities between these studies can be found in areas of employment and living arrangements. Unemployment rates for all three disability groups ranged from 15% to 25% in both samples. In both studies young adults with learning disabilities earned more money on their jobs than former students in the other two groups. The living arrangements of the former students were also similar. The vast majority of former students in both samples continued to live at home and few used formal residential services.

Differences were apparent in the areas of postsecondary education and training, community participation, and personal satisfaction. The level of participation in postsecondary education options was somewhat higher for students with learning disabilities in the MPFS sample (32%) compared to the Bruininks sample (21%). Postsecondary education enrollment levels of young adults in the other two disability groups were similar across the two studies. In regard to community participation, findings from the two samples reveal very slight differences. While the percentage of former students with learning disabilities and mild mental

impairments with checking accounts was consistent across both studies, a greater percentage of young adults with emotional/behavioral disorders (32%) had a checking account in the current sample compared to the Bruininks sample (23%). Finally, the satisfaction of young adults across all life areas was slightly higher in the current study.

The National Longitudinal Transition Study (NLTS)

The National Longitudinal Transition Study (Wagner, 1992) was a comprehensive study that included a national sample of more than 8,000 former students with disabilities. Young adults who had been out of school less than two years were interviewed in 1987. These same young adults were interviewed again in 1990, three to five years after their high school departure. Because the average time since high school departure for the MPFS sample was just slightly over two years, this section will compare the MPFS sample to the NLTS findings on former students who had been out of school two years or less. Two of the four disability groups in the MPFS (learning disability and emotional/behavior disorder) correspond closely with the disability classifications used in the NLTS. However, MPFS data concerning former students with mild mental impairments and moderate/severe disabilities cannot be directly compared to the NLTS. Consequently, comparisons will be made based on data from the total samples of both studies and interesting differences in the learning disability and emotional behavior disorder groups will be highlighted.

The findings from the MPFS sample are considerably more optimistic than those of the NLTS in the areas of employment, postsecondary education and training, and independent living. Comparisons are difficult to make in other areas of postschool adjustment because of the differences in survey items.

The NLTS unemployment rate of 46% contrasts sharply with the 20% unemployment rate of the MPFS sample. Additionally, former students in the MPFS earned higher wages and were more likely to receive a variety of benefits on their jobs. Young adults in the learning disability and emotional behavior disorder groups of the MPFS had much higher rates of employment (18% and 20% more respectively) than their cohorts in the NLTS. It is apparent that sheltered employment was much more prevalent in the NLTS sample in comparison to the MPFS.

Twenty-three percent (23%) of former MPFS students were living independently compared to 11% of the of the NLTS sample. The contrast was most noticeable for young adults in the learning disability (31% compared to 15%) and emotional behavior disorder groups (28% compared to 12%).

The percentage of young adults who had attended at least one postsecondary educational or training program since leaving school was similar in both samples. However, within the learning disability and emotional/behavior disorder groups, the MPFS sample had significantly higher rates of enrollment (20% and 10% differences respectively).

Summary of Comparisons

The findings from the current study are generally consistent with findings from previous postschool follow-up investigations of young adults with disabilities in Minnesota. There are three notable exceptions, all of which indicate that Minnesota is making progress in providing transition services that lead to more independent postschool outcomes for young adults with disabilities. First, supported employment has become a viable option for young adults with moderate/severe disabilities and mild mental impairments. Current data show that a number of individuals are able to avail themselves of support to maintain employment in the community after their school departure – an option that was nearly nonexistent ten years earlier. Second, students with moderate/severe disabilities who move out of their family home and receive residential services are living with fewer housemates than in the past. Number of occupants has long been considered a key indicator of residential integration. Third, a greater percentage of young adults with disabilities are entering postsecondary education and training programs than in the past. The level of participation has increased the most for young adults with learning disabilities.

The differences in the outcomes of young adults with disabilities and those from the general population are not surprising. In the years immediately following high school the status of the two groups are not radically different except in regard to participation in postsecondary education and training programs. Because postsecondary education and training is so closely related to long term socioeconomic status, longitudinal follow-up would undoubtedly show widening discrepancies between the two groups as time goes on. Outcomes related to employment, residential status, recreation and leisure, etc. probably would differ significantly for adults with and without disabilities six to fifteen years after high school departure due to the enhanced opportunities associated with postsecondary education and training.

The outcomes of young adults with disabilities in Minnesota continue to compare very favorably to the outcomes of young adults with disabilities in other sections of the country. Young adults in the current study were much more likely to be employed, live independently, and attend postsecondary education and training programs than the national sample.

Final Conclusions

The findings of this study affirm the value of efforts over the past decade to improve transition services for youth with disabilities. They also document that youth and young adults with disabilities continue to face many challenges in making a successful transition from school to adult life. Despite the progress that has been made, the design and development of transition services are clearly not at an endpoint. The lives of young adults are dynamic and complex, and developing services that improve their lives requires a sustained level of commitment. Minnesotans can take satisfaction in knowing that the outlook for

young adults with disabilities in this state is more positive than in many other parts of the nation and is better today than in the past. However, the collaborative work of persons with disabilities, family members, advocates, professionals, policymakers, researchers and all others who are concerned with the lives of young adults with disabilities is far from finished.

Part V: References

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Part VI: Appendices

A. Resources

Bruininks, R. H., Thurlow, M. L., Lewis, D. R., & Larson, N. (1988). Postschool outcomes for students in special education and other students one to eight years after high school. In R. H. Bruininks, D. R. Lewis, & M. L. Thurlow (Eds.), Assessing outcomes, costs, and benefits of special education programs, (Report Number 88-1) (pp. 9 -110), Minneapolis: Institute on Community Integration, University of Minnesota. *To order, contact:*
Institute on Community Integration
University of Minnesota 109 Pattee Hall
150 Pillsbury Drive SE
Minneapolis, MN 55455
(612) 624-4512

Johnson, D. R., & Sinclair, M. F. (1990). Minnesota post-school follow-up system. Minneapolis: Institute on Community Integration, University of Minnesota. *To order, contact:*
Institute on Community Integration
University of Minnesota 109 Pattee Hall
150 Pillsbury Drive SE
Minneapolis, MN 55455
(612) 624-4512

Minnesota Department of Education (1993). Follow-up 92: Minnesota high school follow-up class of 1991 - one year later. St. Paul: Minnesota Department of Education. *To order, contact:*
Minnesota Department of Education
350 Capitol Square Building
550 Cedar St.
St. Paul, MN 55101
(612) 296-0662

Thurlow, M. L., Bruininks, R. H., Wolman, C., & Steffens, K. (1989). Post school occupational and social status of persons with moderate, severe, and profound mental retardation (Project Report No. 89-3). Minneapolis: University of Minnesota, Institute on Community Integration. *To order, contact:*
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University of Minnesota 109 Pattee Hall
150 Pillsbury Drive SE
Minneapolis, MN 55455
(612) 624-4512

Thompson, J.R. & Johnson, D.R. Using information to improve services to Minnesota youth with disabilities in transition from school to adult life, Minneapolis: University of Minnesota, Institute on Community Integration. *To order, contact:*
Institute on Community Integration
University of Minnesota 109 Pattee Hall
150 Pillsbury Drive SE
Minneapolis, MN 55455
(612) 624-4512

Wagner, M., D'Amico, R., Marder, C., Newman, L., & Blackorby, J. (1992). What happens next? Trends in postschool outcomes of youth with disabilities: The second comprehensive report form the National Longitudinal Transition Study of Special Education Students, Menlo Park, CA: SRI International. *To order, contact:*
SRI International
333 Ravenswood Avenue
Menlo, Park, CA 94025-3493
(415) 326-6200

B. Survey Items

1) Are you working for pay or in the military?
2) Do you have more than one paying job?
3) Is your employment best described as competitive, sheltered, or supported?
4) How long have you worked at your current job(s)?
5) On the average, how many hours do you work per week?
6) What is your average hourly wage?
7) Who most helped you find your current job?
8) What job promotions or benefits have you received since starting your main job?
9) If you are not currently working please describe your daily activity.
10) How many jobs have you had since leaving high school? Please describe what you did for each of your previous jobs and indicate how long you were employed at them.
11) Was there ever a period of time, since leaving high school, that you did not have a job? If so, when and for how long were you without a job?
12) Are you currently a full or part time student?
13) Have you considered enrollment, applied to, started, or completed an apprenticeship, technical college, community college, or university/four year college program?
14) Where do you currently live?
15) Are you on a waiting list for another place to live? If so, how long have you been on the waiting list?
16) Could you tell me the first names and last initial of only those people to whom you feel closest? By this I mean people to whom you feel so close that you couldn't imagine life without them. Who do you feel this close to and how is each person related to you?
17) I would also like you to tell me the names of people to whom you feel very close, but not as close as the people you just mentioned. People who are very important to you but who you don't see, talk to, or do things with as often. Who do you feel this close to and how they are related to you?
18) Do you have children? If so, how many? Do you use day care?
19) Are you married? Have you ever been married?
20) What recreational and leisure activities have you done in the past seven days?
21) When you want to go somewhere, how do you usually get there?
22) Do you go shopping to buy things on your own? Do you pay for things independently?

23) What part of your living expenses do you pay out of your own earnings?

24) Do you presently have a savings account? If yes, do you use it independently?

25) Do you presently have a checking account? If yes, do you use it independently?

26) Have you ever voted in an election for a political candidate?

27) Would you know where to go or who to call if you were a victim of a crime or if you needed medical help?

28) Are you receiving service or assistance from any state agency or community service organization?

29) Do you receive monthly income support from any government programs?

30) Do you receive any specialized services?

31) Would you know where to go or who to call if you needed assistance with education or training or if you needed employment assistance?

32) What services would be of interest to you if available?

33) How satisfied are you with your day time activity?

34) How satisfied are you with your living arrangements?

35) How satisfied are you with what you do in your free time?

36) How satisfied are you with your friendships?

37) What was the last grade of high school that you completed?

38) How many times have you re-entered a program to earn a high school diploma even if you have not finished?

39) Why did you drop out of your original high school program?

40) What could have been done differently to have encouraged you to stay in and finish high school [the first time]?

41) Have you considered enrollment, applied to, started, or completed a GED program?

42) Did you have paying jobs while you were in high school (including summer jobs)? If yes, how many?

43) Which extracurricular activities were you involved in during your high school years?

44) In general, how satisfied are you with the job training you received in high school?

45) In general, how satisfied are you with the academic training you received in high school?

46) In general, how satisfied are you with the training you received in high school to prepare you to live independently?

C. Transition Legislation

Minnesota Transition Legislation

M. S. 120.17 Subd. 3A: Every district shall ensure that all students with disabilities are provided the special instruction and services which are appropriate to their needs. The student's needs and the special education instruction and services to be provided shall be agreed upon through the development of an individual education plan. The plan shall address the student's need to develop skills to live and work as independently as possible within the community. By grade 9 or age 14, the plan shall address the student's needs for transition from secondary services to post-secondary education and training, employment, community participation, recreation and leisure, and home living. The plan must include a statement of the needed transition services, including a statement of the interagency responsibilities or linkages or both before secondary services are concluded.

M. S. 120.17 Subd. 16 [Community Transition Interagency Committee]: A district, group of districts, or special education cooperative, in cooperation with the county or counties in which the district or cooperative is located, shall establish a community transition interagency committee for youth with disabilities, beginning at grade 9 or age equivalent, and their families. Members of the committee shall consist of representatives from special education; vocational and regular education; community education; post-secondary education and training institutions; adults with disabilities who have received transition services, if such adults are available; parents of youth with disabilities; local business or industry; rehabilitative services; county social services; health agencies, and additional public or private adult service providers as appropriate. The committee shall elect a chair and shall meet regularly. The committee shall:

1. identify current services, programs, and funding sources provided within the community for secondary and post-secondary aged youth with disabilities and their families;
2. facilitate the development of multiagency teams to address present and future transition needs of individual students on their individual education plans;
3. develop a community plan to include mission, goals, and objectives, and an implementation plan to assure that transition needs of individuals with disabilities are met;
4. recommend changes or improvements in the community system of transition services;
5. exchange agency information such as appropriate data, effectiveness studies, special projects, exemplary programs, and creative funding of programs; and
6. following procedures determined by the commissioner, prepare a yearly summary assessing the progress of transition services in the community, *including follow-up of individuals with disabilities who*

were provided transition services to determine the outcomes. The summary must be disseminated to all adult services agencies involved in the planning and to the commissioner of education by October 1 of each year.

Federal Transition Legislation (IDEA)

The Education for All Handicapped Children Act has a new name: "IDEA," Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). This act adds a new definition of transition services, adds transition services to students' IEPs nationally, and makes changes in transition programs authorized under Part C of the new law. Following is the new definition of transition services:

"Transition services means a coordinated set of activities for a student designed within an outcome-oriented process, which promotes movement from school to post-school activities including postsecondary education, vocational training, integrated employment (including supported employment), continuing and adult education, adult services, independent living, or community participation. The coordinated set of activities shall be based upon the individual student's needs, taking into account the student's preferences and interests, and shall include instruction, community experiences, the development of employment and other post-school adult living objectives, and, when appropriate, acquisition of daily living skills and functional vocational evaluation."

The law also adds a specific reference to transition services to the overall definition of an "individualized education plan". IEPs must now include:

"...a statement of the needed transition services for students beginning no later than age 16 and annually thereafter (and when determined appropriate for the individual, beginning at age 14 or younger), including, when appropriate, a statement of the interagency responsibilities or linkages (or both) before the student leaves the school setting."

The law also attends to the transition needs of students who use assistive technology. Under IDEA, transition programs that get federal funding may "develop and disseminate exemplary programs and practices that meet the unique needs of students who utilize assistive technology devices and services as such students make the transition to postsecondary education, vocational training, competitive employment, and continuing education or adult services."

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